

Submission date 3/08/2022



HEARING DATE: 3/10/2022

BILL: SB0135 - **SPONSOR:** Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo
TITLE: Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act (CCEJ)
POSITION: Favorable
COMMITTEE: Economic Matters & Environment and Transportation

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Susan Allen and I live in District 30 and I represent the Maryland Poor Peoples Campaign. The Campaign supports the CCEJ Act because the Benefit and Infrastructure Funds provide direct payments to low-wealth families and communities. The information below shows how these families have been disproportionately harmed by fossil-fuel pollution and resulting climate extremes.

Other direct-payment initiatives have lifted poor families and enabled their communities to rebuild. An example is the Federal Child Tax Credit that lifted 40% of children out of poverty.

Our Campaign demands similar direct funding to fossil-fuel (GHG) pollution harmed MD families and communities.

In education and health, we are learning about the effects of pollution from studies in schools about emissions, poor air quality and lead poisoning on children's educational outcomes. Exposure to pollutants in schools has significant, negative impacts on test scores, suspensions, and/or absence from school. The CCEJ Climate Crisis Benefit Fund and the Infrastructure Fund will give back to communities and their schools that have been harmed the most.

The research on the effects of children's learning ability shows us that maintaining lower air pollution levels by 20% could improve the development of a child's working memory by 6.1%, the equivalent of four weeks extra learning time per year. Air pollution from burning fossil fuels is causing or worsening heart disease, asthma, lung disease, and cancer. The particulates in air pollution can also threaten pregnant women and the health of their babies. Reducing GHGs improves air quality and prevents premature deaths.

The CCEJ provides funds for low/moderate income families and local governments to create and implement climate action plans to reduce GHG emissions. This bill is the economic solution to our climate problem: (1) Provides the funding needed for resiliency and (2) Supports the most vulnerable people and businesses in the necessary transition from a fossil fuel economy to a sustainable economy.

For these reasons and more, I urge a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB0135. Respectfully submitted,

Susan Allen, Policy Co-Chair of the Maryland Poor Peoples Campaign
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Cc: Members of the Economic Matters & Environment and Transportation