



February 15, 2022

Senate Bill 528

Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Position: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS SB 528 WITH AMENDMENTS**. The passage of this bill is critical to achieving meaningful greenhouse gas emission reductions across our state that are contributing to rising sea levels along Anne Arundel County's shorelines, increasing the severity of flash floods in our communities, and impacting our farmers and urban neighborhoods with heat waves.

There are many actions we can take on a local level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change, but these actions only extend to our borders. When it comes to a universal problem like greenhouse gasses, we need financial support and leadership from Annapolis to meet statewide climate goals. This bill provides both of those things.

Specifically, the bill's investments in net zero school grants, EMPOWER energy efficiency grants, a Climate Transition and Clean Energy Hub, a Climate Catalytic Capital Fund, and green bonds will provide much needed financial assistance to the local governments, residents, and businesses who are leading this state's transition to a clean energy economy.

As a local government, we have years of experience implementing programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and we believe there are lessons we can take from that experience to improve the bill through amendments.

Specifically, we request that the Committee consider amending the bill in the following ways:

- Provide local governments the authority to set their own local tax incentives for solar projects so that those of us who wish to encourage investments in solar energy that go beyond those envisioned by this bill will finally have the authority to do so;
- Protect beneficial clean energy projects - such as solar arrays - that have been built, or will be built in the coming years, on closed landfills by providing a waiver process for such sites in the proposed, new methane regulations;
- Create a pilot program that would allow local governments and public institutions purchasing costly renewable energy certificates (RECs) from newly built clean energy projects to apply for reimbursement of a portion of the RECs cost, thereby lowering the cost of clean energy commitments for local governments and public institutions and encouraging the construction of new projects across the state; and
- Establish a green building code and energy efficiency task force comprised of local governments, green building experts, and other stakeholders, and direct the group to design new green building

codes, model ordinances, draft regulations, and a timeline for the progressive implementation of new standards between now and 2040.

For these reasons, Anne Arundel County requests the committee **SUPPORT SB 528 WITH AMENDMENTS.**



Steuart Pittman
County Executive