



**Committee: Education Health & Environmental Affairs**  
**Testimony on: SB552-Environment-Climate Crisis Plan-Requirements**  
**Organization: MLC Climate Justice Wing**  
**Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair**  
**Position: Favorable**  
**Hearing Date: February 24, 2022**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB552. The MLC Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on SB552.

As we think we all acknowledge, we are in a climate crisis and are still on the trajectory of catastrophic global warming of 2.7 celsius by century's end. And even if we were to limit global warming by 1.5 celsius -- the goal set in the Paris Climate Accord -- it is only the best *bad* decision we have--it still promises sea level rise, more powerful storms, devastating wildfires, and sharp species decline. If we don't sufficiently reduce emissions this decade, we will set off a domino effect of escalating disasters.

Thus, this bill requires each Maryland County to create a climate crisis plan to address our crisis, to report that plan to the Maryland Department of the Environment who must comment on the viability of the plan, and for the counties to update their plans every three years. The bill specifically requires the plans to

- Increase renewable energy use;
- Expand energy efficiency programs and to reduce the energy use for residential, commercial and public buildings;
- Reducing or eliminating the use of fossil fuels in the design of new buildings;
- Retrofitting existing buildings to be all-electric;
- Transitioning all vehicles, including buses and school buses to be electric;
- Designing and implementing safe infrastructure to promote alternative modes of transportation such as biking and walking;
- Increasing electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
- Benchmarking all buildings;
- Establishing greenhouse gas reduction targets;

- Sequestering carbon dioxide through habitat preservation, increasing urban forests;
- Identifying the communities and infrastructure within the county most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including mitigating the heat island effect, access to emergency cooling, improving air quality, addressing climate-related health care needs; and establishing energy efficiency programs, including financial support for heating and cooling systems;
- Adaption strategies for mitigating the risk; and
- Other measures

If it seems daunting to create and implement such plans, imagine how much worse our futures will be with no plans?

For these reasons, we recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.