

Dear Assembly Legislators,

The UMBC Undergraduate Student Government Association supports the [MaryPIRG Student Climate Action Coalition \(MSCAC\)](#) in their goal to advocate for climate action in the [FUTURE Act](#) bill proposal. The Undergraduate Student Government Association at UMBC is focused on creating opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to make more sustainable choices. We are always looking at new ways to lessen our negative environmental impact and improve our positive social impact.

At UMBC, when we think about sustainability, it is important to remember that sustainability is not only about the environment. Sustainability involves the economy, society, and the environment. It means finding a balance between these three things in order to provide solutions that meet everyone's needs now while also anticipating future needs. The Office of Sustainability hopes to organize our campus in a way that provides solutions to meet our community's needs for the present and for the future. These times are strange, but we want to help make the members of the UMBC community feel comfortable, safe, heard, and empowered to action.

With representatives from 10 colleges and universities in the state and over 1000 supporters, MSCAC is setting realistic goals for Maryland Colleges and Universities to work towards. We would like to support their efforts in accelerated climate action in Maryland as well as their initiatives for environmental justice and education by working at a local level; inside the UMBC community.

As members of an institution that strives to promote equity, we recognize that climate change disproportionately affects low-income communities, as well as communities of color. Many students and faculty members have close ties with Baltimore City, an area that has been especially subject to the effects of climate change. Carbon emissions have contributed to urban heat islands in the city and exacerbated health conditions such as asthma in community members.

We urge policy makers to support the MSCAC FUTURE Act proposal because there is only so much we can do on our own at UMBC. Sustainability at UMBC has been steadily progressing with the [2020 Climate Action Plan](#), as developed by the [Office of Sustainability](#), SGA's [Sustainability Committee](#), as well as our [Reducing Laboratory Plastic Waste Initiative](#). However, we still need our policy-makers to set a precedent for Environmental Justice, Climate Change mitigation, and Environmental Health in our state. We hope to see all of the Colleges and Universities in Maryland working towards the goals set by MSCAC to make our state a model of sustainability moving forward.

Institutions of higher education have played a huge role in Maryland and around the world as beacons of research and societal progress. Public universities have a responsibility to protect, educate, and support citizens of the state and to lead their institution to support these principles. However, these public institutions have massive carbon footprints due to their high-tech research facilities, energy needs, and commuter emissions. Youth are utilizing their agency to remind public research institutions of their guiding principles. This legislation will ensure that universities will lead the way in carbon neutrality, secure co-benefits for the state, and address climate change while addressing climate justice.

Sincerely,

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County Student Government Association

Joshua Gray, SGA President

Shubhi Saxena, Speaker of the Senate

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