

February 15, 2022

Sen. Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Senate Committee on Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
West Miller Senate Building, Room 2
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **SUPPORT** – SB528 – CLIMATE ACTION NOW ACT of 2022

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

I am a long-term Maryland resident and a student at John Hopkins University pursuing my master's in Public Health with a concentration in global environmental sustainability and health. I am very concerned about climate change and am dedicated to doing everything I can to help Maryland move to net zero emissions. I am a strong supporter of SB528 because it provides a viable mechanism to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state of Maryland. It mandates that Maryland meet net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 and reduce emissions by 60 percent by 2030, using 2006 measures as the baseline. It is essential that we pass SB528 this session and start implementing climate reduction strategies as soon as we can.

I believe this bill is a necessary step to transition to a cleaner and more efficient energy sector, with provisions to help low-income families and households. In Maryland, the building sector is the largest consumer of energy, accountable for approximately 90% of the energy use. This bill takes many steps toward reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the buildings sector, including creating the Climate Catalytic Capital Fund and the Building Energy Transition Plan Task Force. The Building Energy Transition Plan Task Force has the responsibility to develop a plan for financially supporting retrofitting of certain buildings. Maryland needs to transition to electrified buildings. SB 528 includes specific energy efficiency requirements and building emission standards which is one of its key strengths.

From my studies and research, I have come to understand the importance of the transition to clean energy. As scales of economies increase, renewable energy will become more and more cost-effective. I believe the Maryland legislature should incentivize the use of renewable energy, especially for low-income residents. This bill does that by setting up personal property tax exemptions for solar equipment and shares in community solar. The bill also calls for the installation of solar energy systems and installation of electric vehicle charging equipment. In addition, the bill establishes zero emission vehicle standards for the State vehicle fleet and school buses.

SB 528 creates a framework to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in specific ways across sectors, including building electrification, transition to clean energy, and supporting electric vehicles. This is an opportunity for Maryland to lead in energy efficiency infrastructure and programs as well as in racial and environmental justice.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Brown