



Committee: Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Testimony on: SB588 - “Capital Projects - High Performance and Green Buildings”
Organization: MLC Climate Justice Wing
Person
Submitting: Diana Younts, co-chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 15, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB588. MLC’s Climate Justice Wing is a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and grasstops organizations focused on getting State level climate justice legislation passed.

SB588 restores the intent of Maryland’s High Performance Building Act that was to create green and healthy K-12 public schools and public buildings. Those standards were substantially weakened in 2018 in legislation that had been primarily focused on creating the Interagency Commission on School Construction. SB588 rectifies the problems created by that legislation.

First, although the Education Article seemingly requires K-12 schools to be built to High Performance Building Standards, Maryland’s current law only applies those standards to K-12 schools and other public buildings if they are “solely funded” with State monies. This means almost no schools must meet the High Performance Buildings Standards. SB588 changes that requirement to 25% of the funding from the State, which restores the intent of State responsibility. It also is an important step in the right direction of making our schools healthier and environmentally sound.

Second, under current law, the remaining buildings subject to the High Performance Buildings Standards are no longer required to be certified that they meet those standards. This has had the predictable result that many buildings do not meet the High Performance Buildings Standards. SB588 rectifies this problem by restoring those certification requirements.

We are of course strong advocates of schools being required to be net-zero or net-zero ready. However, as we navigate this legislative session, we strongly recommend a favorable report

for SB588 because it is a substantial step forward for *all* schools and lessens the risk that schools will be left with nothing from this session.

MLC Climate Justice Wing:

Assateague Coastal Trust
Maryland Legislative Coalition
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
WISE
Frack Free Frostburg
Mountain Maryland Movement

Howard County Indivisible
Howard County Sierra Club
Columbia Association Climate change and sustainability advisory committee
HoCo Climate Action
CHEER
Climate XChange - Maryland
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/
National Parks Conservation Association
350 Montgomery County
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
The Climate Mobilization Montgomery County
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
Audubon Naturalist Society
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Environmental Justice Ministry
Coalition For Smarter Growth
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
MCPS Clean Energy Campaign
MoCo DCC
Potomac Conservancy

Casa de Maryland
Nuclear Information & Resource Service
Clean Air Prince Georges
Laurel Resist
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial Cafos
Wicomico NAACP
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Chispa MD
Climate Law & Policy Project
Maryland Poor Peoples Campaign
Labor for Sustainability
The Nature Conservancy
Clean Air Prince Georges
350 Baltimore
Maryland Environmental Health Network
Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis
Talbot Rising
Adat Shalom Climate Action
Chesapeake Earth Holders
Climate Parents of Prince Georges
Echotopia
Maryland NAACP State Conference,
Environmental Justice Committee

