



**Committee: Finance**

**Testimony on: SB126 - Environment-New Motor Vehicle-Pollution Fee**

**Organization: MLC Climate Justice Wing**

**Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: February 15, 2022**

Dear M. Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today. The MLC Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on SB126. This bill would impose a modest, one-time pollution fee based on the carbon dioxide tailpipe exhaust rating of new passenger vehicles and light trucks sold or registered in Maryland based on EPA pollution ratings. The bill further provides that those collected fees be used to provide rebates to Marylanders who purchase electric vehicles, to expand electric vehicle infrastructure, and to fund the purchase of electric public transit buses and school buses.

The transportation sector is Maryland's number one generator of climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions. Our state's Greenhouse Gas Inventory indicates that gasoline and diesel powered vehicles account for 89% of this pollution.

Tailpipe emissions from these vehicles also are hazardous to human health and contribute to cancers, heart disease, asthma, emphysema and other respiratory diseases. More than 80% of Marylanders live in counties that do not meet federal clean air standards for ozone, due in significant part to tailpipe emissions. Many black and brown communities in Maryland are particularly hard hit with health issues caused by tailpipe pollution due to the cumulative impact created by their proximity to major highways and roadways; and industry polluters such as the Wheelabrator incinerator, landfills, fossil fuel power plants, sub stations, and open coal transfer stations.

In 2013, Maryland joined seven other states in signing a memorandum of understanding committing to have 300,000 zero-emission vehicles (including plug-ins) on the road by 2025, and 600,000 EVs on the road by 2030. The state also has a goal it set for itself to reduce state greenhouse gas emissions 50% by 2030 (compared to the 2006 level).

This bill makes even the most polluting vehicles part of the solution to expanding the use of electric vehicles by imposing a fee on those vehicles and then putting those collected fees in the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) and dedicate those fees to incentivize the purchase of electric vehicles, electric school buses, and electric public transportation buses, and to expand the electric vehicle infrastructure. The fee is imposed on each new motor vehicle sold or registered in the State with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [Greenhouse Gas Rating](#) equal to or higher than the minimum pollution level of 400 Co2 (gm/mile). Those fees range from \$250 to \$450. The bill exempts commercial vehicles for transporting goods, agricultural vehicles, public transportation, ambulances, and local government vehicles that are not used as passenger vehicles.

The bill is smart policy to both disincentive the purchase of high polluting vehicles and to make those vehicles part of the solution to expand the use of electric vehicles.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

**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  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
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