



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *Senate Bill 528 – Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022*  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
February 15, 2022**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. We work tirelessly throughout the entire Greater Washington area to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents, support our Jewish day schools and community centers, and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the entire Jewish community.

The JCRC has a long history of favoring policies which promote climate justice, protect the environment, and reverse climate change. Our agency is committed to addressing the detrimental effects of climate change, which is accelerating due to human behaviors, many of which are within our power to change. Senate Bill 528 – Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 - requires the state to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions through the use of various measures, including the alteration of statewide greenhouse gas emissions goals, the establishment of a net-zero statewide greenhouse gas emissions goal, the development of certain energy efficiency and electrification requirements for certain buildings, and requiring electric companies to increase their annual incremental gross energy savings through certain programs and services.

SB 528 requires that by January 2030, at least 75 percent of the electricity supply procured for use in state facilities shall be derived from low-carbon renewable energy sources. While this stipulation is not inconsistent with our agency’s environmental policy resolution, it might be more effective to require a percentage reduction in the current level of carbon emissions, however achieved. That is, carbon emissions can also be reduced through conservation and efficiency improvements. Additionally, given that the JCRC represents more than 50 houses of worship in the state, we would like to ask for clarification in SB 528 regarding the establishment of building emissions standards for state and non-state buildings and specifically about the definition of “commercial building.” While we support SB 528, we also ask for the committee to consider our suggestions and clarify our questions.