



**TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
SB 528 – Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022  
POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**By: Betsy Singer and Laura Salganik, Co-Chairs**

**Date: February 15, 2022**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Howard County believes that climate change is a human-induced, international security threat and one of the greatest moral issues of our time. The JCRC endorses and supports continued advocacy for legislation in Howard County and at the state level to require clean, renewable energy and discourage continued dependence on fossil fuels that emit carbon dioxide and warm the Earth's atmosphere.

The issue of justice must be central to the actions we take in moving away from fossil fuels toward clean energy sources such as wind and solar. Following a proposed national standard, all efforts in Maryland to reduce harmful emissions must guarantee that at least 40% of climate investments and benefits accrue to disadvantaged communities. Communities of color in our state have historically suffered disproportionately from dirty energy and climate impacts. Our climate solutions must reach these communities first.

The Climate Solutions Now Act, if passed without weakening amendments, will begin reversing negative trends while taking concrete steps toward a carbon-free Maryland for all and achieving climate, equity, and clean energy goals.

Those goals must include:

- 1) A mandate to cut greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2030 (below 2006 levels).
- 2) A requirement that all newly constructed buildings in Maryland have electric-only energy systems exempting only kitchen appliances.
- 3) Serious efforts to begin electrifying our transportation system starting with school buses and state-owned vehicles.
- 4) Robust climate investments in overburdened and low- and moderate-income communities, including a Climate Justice Corps that will support clean energy projects and create jobs for young adults.
- 5) A Net Zero School Fund to assist local school systems in building net-zero schools.

We urge you to immediately pass SB 528, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022.