

LISA M. FERRETTO, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP, Eco-Districts AP, GGP

February 14, 2022

Senator Pinsky
Chair of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Re: SB 528, Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022

Position: Favorable with amendments as suggested by the Climate Partners Group

Dear Senator Pinsky and members of the EHEA Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 528, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022. I am currently a Sustainability Director and Architect and am a member of both the AIA, American Institute of Architects, as well as USGBC, the U.S. Green Building Council. I am also a representative on the AIA Large Firm Sustainable roundtable collaborating with other large architecture firms across the country to lead the way to carbon neutrality. I have served as a member of the MD Green Building Council (MDGBC) for three years and am currently serving as a Commissioner for Baltimore City's Commission on Sustainability.

The Climate Solutions Now Act ensures that Maryland is a partner and a leader in Sustainability. It acknowledges the interconnected issues and strategies involved in undertaking climate change - buildings, transportation, waste, and most importantly, the people. The bill amends Maryland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions goal to a 60% reduction by 2030 and a net zero emissions by 2045. Locally, these targets directly align with the goals Mayor Scott announced in January for the City of Baltimore, and globally, it works towards the Paris Climate Agreement targets and those set by Architecture 2030 and adopted by the AIA.

Any path to carbon neutrality and goal of reaching zero greenhouse gas emissions will need to include a move away from fossil fuels. "Direct fuel use in ... buildings accounted for 18% of Maryland's ... greenhouse gas emissions" ([MDE](#), 2017). We also need to address total energy use - where buildings account for **39%** of Maryland's total energy consumption ([EIA](#), 2019). This is the same percentage reported as GHG emissions by sector in Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory ([MDE](#), 2017). The EPA also states that Carbon Dioxide makes up about 80% of the total US GHG emissions, ([EPA](#), 2019). And when we zoom into an urban area like Baltimore, building's account for about 70% of the total carbon dioxide emissions in the City.

Reducing emissions in buildings is a critical component to reducing overall GHG emissions in the State, and to be successful, we also need to require that buildings being constructed now are energy efficient. I understand there may be amendments proposed to the bill to include energy conservation targets for new construction and major renovations. The modeled energy savings in new buildings will be greenhouse gas emission savings in the future. Energy efficiency measures also help to reduce operating costs and we know the cost of construction and inflation is a huge topic in the industry today. I also fully support the inclusion of programs that incentivize efficiency and work to alleviate energy burden. The median energy burden of low-income households in Baltimore is over 3 times higher than non-low-income households.

The Climate Solutions Now Act also includes "Building Performance Standards" - provisions for reducing emissions from existing buildings. This is also an important piece of comprehensive climate legislation to ensure that our existing building stock is on target to reduce energy consumption by the State's overall target goal and year. Building Performance Standards though cannot happen without Benchmarking. We cannot

get to where we want to go (zero emissions by 2045) without knowing where we are. Benchmarking sets the baseline and creates the path. It is about transparency and accountability and overall it increases awareness of energy efficiency.

The Climate Solutions Now Act also recognizes the crucial link with social environment and communities. The bill includes provisions for a Climate Catalytic capital fund, a Maryland Green Bond Program, a Just Transition Employment and retraining working group, a MD Climate Justice Corps, a zero-energy school grant fund, a Climate Transition and Clean Energy Hub and a Building Energy Transition Implementation Task Force.

As a sustainability architect and advocate – I am excited about SB 528, the Climate Solutions Now Act, and the positive impact this bill will have. It ensures that Maryland is doing its part to meet the climate targets needed; holds the State accountable; and protects our State’s finances, the natural environment, and most importantly, the people.

I look forward to the favorable passing of this bill as *Now* is the time to *Act on Climate Solutions*.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa M. Ferretto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa M. Ferretto, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP, Eco-Districts AP, GGP