



Secular Maryland

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HB 1263 - SUPPORT

Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment

Dear Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

This bill would create an office within the office of the Governor to facilitate the implementation of the Commission on Climate Change's recommendations by the various state agencies, to supplement their recommendations with research and investigations addressing climate change mitigation and negative impact remediation opportunities, to assist local governments with their climate change plans, and to report annually to the Governor and General Assembly.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration developed the Annual Greenhouse Gas Index ("AGGI" for short). Updated yearly, the AGGI compares the combined warming influence of the long-lived greenhouse gases—atmospheric gases that absorb and radiate heat—to their influence in 1990. They chose 1990 because that is the year that countries who signed the U.N. Kyoto Protocol agreed to use as a benchmark for their efforts to reduce emissions. By the end of 2020, the warming influence of human-produced greenhouse gases had risen 47 percent above the 1990 baseline. The AGGI has continued to rise steadily since at least 1980. According to the EPA, 35% of CO₂ is created by the transportation sector, 31% by the electricity, 16% by industry and 11% by residential and commercial. For methane it is 30% natural gas and petroleum, 27% enteric fermentation, 17% landfills. For nitrous oxide it is 75% agricultural soil management. For fluorinated gases it is 92% substitution of ozone depleting substances.

The urgency of the climate crisis we are facing should not be understated. It is an existential threat that needs to be addressed now. If passed, this bill would help put us

on track to reversing decades of emitting green house gases that have contributed significantly to the decline of our common environment. We encourage this committee and our General Assembly to step up to our generation's challenge of creating a cleaner Maryland that is healthier for everyone.

Respectfully,
Mathew Goldstein
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Bowie, MD