



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education

## House Bill 1263

Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment

Date: March 9, 2022  
To: Environment and Transportation

Position: Support  
From: Josh Kurtz, MD Executive Director

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1263, which establishes the Office on Climate Change within the Department of the Environment. This office will work to implement the recommendations that the Maryland Commission on Climate Change makes every year. The Commission develops these recommendations through public working groups that focus on climate change impacts and solutions.

Climate change and sea level rise pose resiliency challenges to Maryland. Rising sea levels threaten to inundate miles of Chesapeake shoreline. For the Chesapeake Bay, warmer waters exacerbate the Bay's dead zones, stressing fish and other forms of marine life critical to the Bay's restoration.<sup>1</sup> On top of the issues to our natural communities, climate change threatens our people as well. Extreme weather, heat and flooding are increasing in regularity and intensity due to climate change. The Office will provide for a central point in state government to coordinate and act to limit the impacts of climate change in Maryland.

**The legislation would create the office to implement long-term emissions reductions targets recommended by the Maryland Commission on Climate Change.** The long-term goal of net zero by 2045 is widely regarded as critical for keeping global warming below 1.5 C and preventing the worst impacts of climate change<sup>2</sup>. The Maryland Commission on Climate Change recommended the same goal after evaluating the capacity of the state to meet it while considering economic impacts of action<sup>3</sup>. The recommendations focus on the three largest sectors, which account for over 85% of Maryland's emissions.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 1263.** For more information, please contact Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [rclark@cbf.org](mailto:rclark@cbf.org) and 443.995.8753

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<sup>1</sup> How Climate Change Impacts the Chesapeake Bay, [Climate Change](#), Chesapeake Bay Foundation, last visited 2.12.2021.

<sup>2</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 C. <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm/>

<sup>3</sup> Maryland Commission on Climate Change. Annual Report 2021.

[https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/ClimateChange/MCCC/Documents/2021%20Annual%20Report%20FINAL%20\(2\).pdf](https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/ClimateChange/MCCC/Documents/2021%20Annual%20Report%20FINAL%20(2).pdf)

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