



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0596
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT – ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS**

Bill Sponsor: Delegate W. Fisher

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0596 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have well over 30,000 members across the state.

Our members believe that ALL Marylanders have a right to clean air and clean water. We believe that the state should be making good decisions about sustaining our environment and we believe that this bill is codifying what we expected would already be happening.

However, we know the state is not making good decisions for us. Fossil fuel infrastructure litters our state and CAFOs have expanded across the Eastern Shore. We've invested billions in roads and little in public transit.

That is why we need these rights codified. Municipalities do not have much in the way of recourse when the Board of Public Works or the Public Service Commission approve harmful infrastructure. We need a mechanism to allow localities and municipalities defend their residents against these disastrous decisions.

Polling shows that the people of Maryland believe in this Amendment and would vote for it if it was on the ballot, and our members are in very strong support. Let the people vote on this. Let them reclaim their voice.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.