



## **HB363 – Attorney General - Climate Change Actions - Authorization**

### **Testimony before**

### **House Health and Government Operations Committee**

**February 15, 2022**

### **Position: Favorable**

Madame Chair, Madame Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Richard Deutschmann, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in support of HB363, which would authorize the Attorney General to bring legal action against business entities that have engaged in unlawful conduct to exacerbate climate change. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Ruth in sponsoring this important legislation.

The Attorney General currently is not authorized to investigate or prosecute large corporations that have, through deceptive or illegal means, furthered their business pursuits while being key contributors to global climate change. These collective actions have cost the state of Maryland untold expenses to deal with rising waters, nuisance flooding, stronger storms and draught, and the associated damages. It is estimated that Maryland will be on the hook for \$Billions in the coming years in resiliency and disaster expenditures. HB363 provides the Attorney General with the authorization and ability to hire outside counsel to pursue and prosecute these companies. Absent Executive leadership, this bill is needed to bring accountability, and tort funding to aid in the current and upcoming expenditures.

For these reasons, we strongly support HB363. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

#### **We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

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