



TESTIMONY FOR HB0729

FACILITATING UNIVERSITY TRANSFORMATIONS BY UNIFYING REDUCTIONS IN EMISSIONS (FUTURE) ACT

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Solomon

Committee: Appropriations

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0729 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members believe that this bill offers a great opportunity for Maryland's next generation to become leaders in the climate change fight by having universities develop plans to become carbon neutral. If passed, this bill would stipulate that each four year public university in Maryland would be completely carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate step requiring carbon neutrality for direct emissions and purchased electricity in 2025.

Direct emissions include emissions physically produced on campus, including boilers, central heating plants, on campus power plants, university owned vehicles, refrigerants and chemicals, and agricultural sources. Purchased electricity includes electricity produced by the burning of fossil fuels purchased by the university, but not produced on campus.

Universities can use carbon offsets to achieve carbon neutrality, such as electrifying fleets, increasing energy efficiency, and transitioning to renewable energy. If carbon offsets are used to achieve carbon neutrality, they must undergo a verification process to ensure they are effective. Additionally, if carbon offsets are used, the amount of social cost of carbon for using the offset will be put into a scholarship fund for an Environmental Justice Scholarship Program.

Our members believe that this is an effective way to educate the next generation on how carbon neutrality can be achieved and an exciting opportunity to get our public universities engaged. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.