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BILL NO.: **House Bill 1263**

TITLE: Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment

SPONSOR: Delegate P. Young

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 9, 2022

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1263 – Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment. This legislation would establish the Office on Climate Change to coordinate climate change efforts across the State.

Climate change is a present and rapidly increasing threat with the potential to cause mass devastation. The need for a climate change coordinator and interagency plan is vital across all levels of government to consolidate sustainability efforts. County Executive John Olszewski created the position of Chief Sustainability Officer in 2019, which is currently held by Jenn Aiosa. Since her appointment, Chief Aiosa has made great strides in proactively fighting climate change and setting bold sustainability goals. Her office has made tremendous strides by increasing solar energy facilities on County properties, implementing efforts to increase electric vehicle infrastructure, and continuing the County’s efforts to power 100% of County operations with renewable energy.

House Bill 1263 would establish the Office on Climate Change to coordinate climate efforts with the authority of the Governor’s Office. This office would collaborate with local governments to enhance climate efforts in their local communities while also coordinating State implementation, encouraging collaborative problem-solving, and applying adaptive management when necessary. This legislation would ensure that Maryland meets its statewide climate goals to promote a safer, more sustainable future.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1263. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov.