



Secular Maryland

secularmaryland@tutanota.com

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HB 915 - SUPPORT

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program and Climate Impact Health Coverage Program – Establishment

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

Secular Maryland appeals to our lawmakers to enact new laws to tackle climate change now. Being rational requires following the empirical evidence wherever it takes us. Climate warming denialism is an attack against rationality that needs to be unequivocally opposed. Air pollution is a significant public health problem. This bill responsibly confronts this serious problem by establishing a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program in the Department of the Environment to secure payments from businesses that extract fossil fuels or refine petroleum products that would provide a source of revenue for climate change adaptive or mitigation infrastructure projects and efforts to address the health impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations.

People who live and work in areas with high levels of air pollution are significantly more likely to die from COVID-19 and suffer from various other ailments such as asthma and dementia. A recent study [Erika Garcia, Jill Johnston, Rob McConnell, Lawrence Palinkas, Sandrah P. Eckel. California's early transition to electric vehicles: Observed health and air quality co-benefits. Science of The Total Environment, 2023; 161761 DOI: 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.161761] of California's transition to zero emissions vehicles (ZEVs) compared data on total ZEV registration, air pollution levels and asthma-related emergency room visits across the state between 2013 to 2019. As ZEV adoption increased within a given zip code, local air pollution levels and emergency room visits both dropped.

Respectfully,

Mathew Goldstein
3838 Early Glow Ln
Bowie, MD