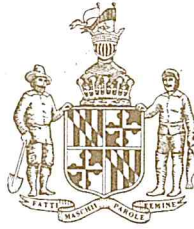


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***TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 743***

***CLIMATE, LABOR, AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
EQUITY ACT OF 2023***

***EDUCATION, ENERGY, & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE***

***FEBRUARY 23, 2023***

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 743 is a piece of legislation designed to require state agencies to take better account of their actions in relation to climate, labor, employment, and environmental justice policies in overburdened communities. This bill improves Maryland's permitting process when it comes to building industrial factories, wastewater treatment facilities, highways, mining operations, power plants and other potentially dangerous projects by doing a few things.

It ensures that key state agencies in Maryland are held accountable (through reporting) to the state's climate, environmental justice, and labor goals. It requires thorough planning, evaluation, reporting, and mitigation of negative impacts on underserved or overburdened communities before operations are permitted to begin on meaningful projects. It fosters measurable communication between the Maryland Department of the Environment, environmental permit applicants, and underserved or overburdened communities and it allows Marylanders to receive regular notifications regarding environmental permits that may have a negative impact on their health and well-being.

This legislation is a very straightforward attempt to ensure that all Maryland communities receive the necessary oversight actions to ensure their environmental safety and protection. This legislation simply aims to better serve all Marylanders.

**For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 743.**