



TESTIMONY FOR HB0840
Climate, Labor, and Environmental Equity Act of 2023

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Boyce

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0840 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

We strongly support this legislation because it requires state agencies in their decision-making processes to make meaningful assessments of a proposed action's potential climate impact and effect on underserved and overburdened communities, environmental justice communities, and workers and jobs in Maryland. In the past, many decisions have been made that have adversely affected whole communities in Maryland. Decision-making should include the equity impact that the project would have on the communities that it affects.

Maryland's public agencies currently do not systematically assess how their decisions may contribute to environmental injustice, climate change, and worker or labor impacts and have historically taken actions that have contributed to public health disparities for BIPOC, low-income, and limited English proficient communities. These communities are disproportionately burdened by environmental hazards that include exposure to polluted air, waterways, and landscapes. The hazards ripple through the community creating disparities in health, wealth, and even life expectancy.

The Climate, Labor and Environmental Equity Act creates a quantifiable way to protect these communities, engage in meaningful communication, and prioritize these communities for investment.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.