



March 6, 2023

Chair Kumar Barve and Vice Chair Dana Stein
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Written Testimony of Victoria Leonard on
HB 840 - Climate, Labor, and Environmental Equity Act of 2023**

Position: Support

Thank you Chair Barve and Vice Chair Stein and members of the committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 840.

My name is Victoria Leonard, Political and Legislative Director for the Baltimore Washington Laborers' District Council (BWLDC), an affiliate of the Laborers' International Union of North America, or LiUNA for short. The BWLDC represents more than 7,500 members across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Our members are proudly employed on many infrastructure construction projects across the region.

LiUNA supports HB 840. We particularly appreciate that the bill applies labor standards to all state agencies in the permit application process, as stated on page 7 line 5 (B) through page 8 in its entirety. HB 840 is also important because Maryland does not have a process to adequately consider how projects and polluters impact state workers, jobs, or property values. Maryland does not consider how industry impacts a community's health or climate when permits are issued. Further, communities nearby have not been consulted about where these projects get sited, and in many cases, have been left out entirely of this process.

HB 840 will help address environmental injustice at the permitting level for projects that impact the land, air, and water, such as industrial operations, wastewater treatment plants, highway expansions, mining operations, power plants, and landfills.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 840.