



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 424

DATE: February 22, 2023

SPONSOR: Senators Elfreth and Feldman

ASSIGNED TO: Budget and Taxation Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Garrett Fitzgerald (garrett.fitzgerald@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Favorable (Department of Environmental Protection)

Public Projects - Global Warming Potential of Materials (Buy Clean Maryland Act)

Traditional production of cement and concrete results in significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In recent years, industry has learned how to create cement and concrete using materials and methods that result in substantially lower GHG emissions. Selecting cement and concrete with relatively low GHG impacts, or 'global warming potential,' can be a useful strategy to help achieve Maryland's climate goals.

This bill would use the purchasing and standard-setting power of the State to drive industry to produce cement and concrete with lower GHG emissions. The bill would require the State's Department of General Services (DGS) to establish maximum acceptable global warming potential for any cement or concrete mixture the State (or a contractor of the State) can use in constructing a public project.

The bill would require that the maximum acceptable global warming potential be based on the industry average for that material, ensuring feasibility. DGS would review the maximum acceptable global warming potential every three years and adjust as appropriate. The bill allows DGS to waive requirements for a given public project in the event of technical infeasibility, cost, delay, or lack of a competitive bidding market.

This legislation offers a feasible and important opportunity for the State to lead the way on climate change by reducing GHG emissions associated with cement and concrete. The standards established by DGS will also have the potential to be replicated and applied by other state and local governments, helping to transform industry and driving greater impact.

We respectfully request that the Budget and Taxation Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 424.