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**TO:** The Honorable Brian Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer  
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

**RE:** SB743 - Climate, Labor, and Environmental Equity Act of 2023 (**Support**)

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The Office of the Attorney General "OAG" respectfully requests a favorable report on Senator Michael Jackson's bill, Senate Bill 743. This bill provides an important enhancement to MDE's authority, providing it with clear statutory authority to deny, amend, or condition permit decisions based upon MDE's assessment of environmental justice factors and related impacts to communities surrounding a permit applicant's facility, and to proactively involve those communities in its decisions. In addition, SB 743 will authorize MDE to charge a reasonable fee to support implementation of these new requirements. Finally, the bill requires the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) to annually report on whether agency decisions support businesses that promote equitable labor and wage standards, as specified within the bill.

Senate Bill 743 will address potential climate impacts and effects on underserved and overburdened communities, seek environmental justice, and provide opportunity for the working people of Maryland. SB 743 would create a quantifiable way to identify and protect overburdened communities, engage in meaningful communication, and prioritize them for investment. Equal treatment and respect for all of our neighborhoods and communities are long overdue.

For all the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 743.

**cc:** The Hon. Michael Jackson & Committee Members

This bill letter is a statement of the Office of Attorney General's policy position on the referenced pending legislation. For a legal or constitutional analysis of the bill, Members of the House and Senate should consult with the Counsel to the General Assembly, Sandy Brantley. She can be reached at 410-946-5600 or sbrantley@oag.state.md.us.