



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 1438

DATE: March 5, 2024

SPONSOR: Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo

ASSIGNED TO: Economic Matters Committee

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

POSITION: Favorable (Department of Environmental Protection)

Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2024

This legislation seeks to establish the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program to secure compensatory payments from fossil fuel businesses in order to provide a source of revenue for State efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and address the health impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations. The bill directs the Maryland Department of the Environment to recover payments from responsible parties as defined in the bill, and to identify and disburse that funding to projects in Maryland through the creation of a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund.

We support the general premise of this legislation that companies that have profited immensely while polluting in a manner that has significantly contributed to the problem of climate change should be held accountable and required to help pay for the costs borne by Maryland communities because of that climate pollution.

This approach represents a rare and appropriate opportunity to secure new revenue to meet the significant costs of adapting to and mitigating climate change. We appreciate the intent to achieve this goal in a manner whereby those costs borne by responsible parties would not be significantly passed on to Maryland residents. We also appreciate and support the inclusion of grants to local jurisdictions in the list of potential uses of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund. Local jurisdictions such as Montgomery County are on the front lines of addressing climate impacts such as flooding and extreme heat, and are well positioned to effectively deploy funds in alignment with the goals of this legislation.

We respectfully request that the Economic Matters Committee give House Bill 1438 a favorable report.