



**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1438
Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2024**

House - Economic Matters

Jose Coronado-Flores , On Behalf of CASA

March 7th, 2024

Dear Honorable Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,

CASA is pleased to offer **favorable testimony in support of HB1438 -Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2024**. HB1438 is important legislation that will address current and future climate change related weather impacts by holding the fossil fuel companies with the largest stakes in the industry accountable for pushing a product they knew was dangerous for the Earth and people. CASA is invested in seeing this bill pass because of the health risks, financial losses, and general dangers that climate change poses on the immigrant and working class community in particular.

Some of the most at-risk individuals in terms of climate change are those who reside in flood-prone areas. Funds obtained from the RENEW Act would directly augment the state's budget comprehensive flood management program. There are real life consequences of inadequate stormwater management in communities like East Riverdale and Rockville where low-income people have been hurt, displaced, and lost their possessions. The RENEW Act also directs money towards preparing for and recovering from severe weather events. We cannot wait for weather to become even more extreme and more people to die or be hurt before making substantial improvements to our response and readiness.

The last point I want to convey on flooding and sea-level rise is that the RENEW Act allocates funds to relocate or elevate Wastewater Treatment Plants. This finer point is based on the fact that treatment plants like the Patapsco Treatment plant in Curtis Bay, which is an overburdened and underserved community, are in locations that will flood in the future, so preventing the environmental and human disaster of these facilities being disrupted is imperative. We cannot wait to address these things until after these disasters occur.

Lastly, many CASA members are construction workers, landscapers, and holders of other manual labor outdoor positions. As temperatures rise and more brutal summers come, they will be at extreme risk of heat-related illness. This bill directly addresses their needs for health care relating to the effects of climate change by directing money to the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities.

In conclusion, HB1438 will help protect those in the state who are most vulnerable to the imminent effects of climate change. CASA urges a favorable report.

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