

2/21/2024

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0024 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Environment - Impact of Environmental Permits and State Agency Actions

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee and Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0024, Environment - Impact of Environmental Permits and State Agency Actions

The Maryland Department of the Environment will need to conduct a climate and environmental equity evaluation regarding the impact of issuing an approval for projects affecting these items should this important bill be passed. This bill will enforce a standard treatment on the issuance of approvals that will also require additional public opportunities for input and feedback on the decisions being made.

The strength of this bill is the public notification and input requirements that will force decision makers to do what has been neglected in the past. That neglect to consult and involve the citizens of Maryland has led to environmental degradation, a lack of environmental justice, and disregard for who is affected and how they will be affected in any project of any type with a discernable environmental impact.

ClimateXChange has documented the problems in their article “A Look at Environmental Justice Issues in Maryland”.¹ The article cites specific examples of where this lack of notice to residents and disregard of how decisions are made and the environment considered demonstrate existing and continuing harms to health and the overall environment.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0024

¹ <https://climate-xchange.org/2022/01/14/a-look-at-environmental-justice-issues-in-maryland/>