

## **Testimony of Solana Page in Support of HB 993 – Commemorative Weeks – Maryland Climate Education Week**

Honorable Chair Pena-Melnyk,

I am honored to testify in support of the initiative to establish a Climate Education Week in our community. As a concerned citizen deeply invested in the well-being of our planet and future generations, I firmly believe that education is key to addressing the urgent challenges posed by climate change.

The need for climate education has never been more critical. With each passing year, we witness the escalating impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, rising water levels as seen in Annapolis and Ellicott City, biodiversity loss, and shifts in bird's & insect's migratory patterns. These challenges not only threaten our environment but also jeopardize public health, economic stability, and social equity.

Establishing a Climate Education Week presents a unique opportunity to raise awareness, foster understanding, and inspire action at the local level. By dedicating a week to educational activities, workshops, and community events focused on climate change, we can empower individuals of all ages to become informed and engaged citizens.

There are several compelling reasons to support the establishment of a Climate Education Week:

1. **Education Empowers Action:** By providing individuals with accurate, science-based information about climate change, we can empower them to make informed choices in their daily lives. Education serves as a catalyst for action, inspiring individuals to adopt sustainable practices, advocate for policy changes, and participate in collective efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
2. **Building Climate Literacy:** Climate change is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires a nuanced understanding of its causes, impacts, and potential solutions. A Climate Education Week offers a platform to build climate literacy across diverse audiences, including students, educators, policymakers, and the general public. By enhancing climate literacy, we can cultivate a more informed and engaged society that can articulate their concerns and adapt to the climate-related challenges ahead.
3. **Fostering Community Resilience:** Climate change poses significant risks to minority and low SES communities, but it also presents opportunities for resilience and adaptation. Through educational initiatives focused on climate resilience, we can empower communities to assess their vulnerabilities, develop adaptive strategies, and build social cohesion. By fostering community resilience, we can enhance our collective capacity to withstand and recover from the impacts of climate change.
4. **Promoting Environmental Justice:** Climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities, exacerbating existing inequalities and injustices. A Climate Education Week provides a platform to highlight the intersectional dimensions of climate change, including its disproportionate impacts on low-income communities, communities of color, and indigenous

populations. By centering equity and justice in climate education efforts, we can work towards a more inclusive and equitable transition to a sustainable future.

In conclusion, the establishment of a Climate Education Week represents a valuable opportunity to educate, inspire, and mobilize our community in the fight against climate change. By investing in climate education, we can empower individuals to become informed advocates for environmental stewardship and agents of positive change.

I urge you to support HB 993 for the benefit of current and future generations.