



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the  
**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
on  
**Senate Bill 306**  
January 31, 2024  
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to urge a public commitment to addressing climate disaster and its companion, environmental justice. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community in three ELCA synods in every part of our State.

The ELCA identified greenhouse gases as environmental threats to earth's climate in 1993 ("Caring for Creation," ELCA 1993 assembly). We have now added justice, investment, and urgency to our commitments for what is now a "Climate Crisis", becoming "climate catastrophe" as revealed by the most recent episodes of fire and flood in North America ("Earth's Climate Crisis", ELCA social message, April 2023).

**Senate Bill 306** updates Critical Area goals to include resilience, justice and equity consideration when regulating human activity in the critical areas of the State. It also requires critical area mapping to be updated more frequently because the evolving crises are more numerous and catastrophic than current planning can comprehend. We urge a favorable report on this modest adjustment to current law.

Lee Hudson