

HB128 - SUPPORT

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HB 128 — Responding to Emergency Needs from Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025

Joint Meeting of Economic Matters and Environment and Transportation Committees
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Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, Members of the Economic Matters Committee, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

We urge a favorable report on HB0128. Currently, Maryland taxpayers like us are stuck paying the full cost of climate disasters and adaptation projects. This goes for large municipal and state climate mitigation and adaptation efforts as well as for climate disasters and damage to taxpayers' personal property.

For example, about six years ago, we had to spend \$15,000 on stormwater drainage around our home and had to install extra large gutters and downspouts to handle exceptional rain events that, due to climate change, are now more the norm than the exception. Many of our Silver Spring neighbors have had to take similar measures, and others cannot afford to do so. Homes that never flooded (our neighborhood was built in the 1940s) now flood regularly.

In addition, our homeowners insurance has been going up significantly the past few years even though we've never filed a claim. We are, of course, paying for climate damages to other people's homes, and you are as well. This situation affects renters, too, because increased building insurance costs get passed down to tenants in the form of rent increases. In this sense, climate change is a housing affordability issue.

We and our neighbors—homeowners and renters alike—need and deserve a break, and that's precisely what the RENEW Act offers. RENEW requires out-of-state oil and gas companies to pay for the cost of climate disasters and adaptation, and it does so in a way that prevents those companies from passing on the cost to consumers. Plus, it's only fair that the companies that have caused climate change pay for the damage they are causing.

Please do the right thing for Maryland taxpayers, and pass the RENEW Act. We urge a favorable report.