

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 Committee  
January 23, 2025

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.

I am a volunteer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network and a resident of Bethesda, Maryland. I strongly support a favorable report on HB0128. The RENEW Act will hold fossil fuel companies accountable for their actions while safeguarding the economic wellbeing of Marylanders.

Several years ago, while living in California, I experienced a climate disaster first hand—one in an escalating series of devastating wildfires. Watching the news now, I relive how the sun glowed red in the middle of the day, how ash fell from the sky, and how the smoke stung my lungs even through my N-95 mask. When I moved to Maryland, I was relieved to be free of California's ever-expanding fire season. But that summer, I smelled smoke in the air again, this time from wildfires burning in Canada. Lately, it seems like when it's not smoky, it's stormy, or too hot to go outside.

These climate disasters are costly. To address flooding alone, taxpayers are contributing \$50 million in Annapolis and \$228 million in Howard County. We are footing the tab for the damages that fossil fuel companies anticipated decades ago. Like cigarette companies, they chose to spread falsehoods rather than warn us about the harm their product would cause.

Under the RENEW Act, the state will first conduct a study to quantify the economic costs of climate change to Marylanders, then require out-of-state fossil fuel companies to pay these costs. It will be a one-time fee, and only companies that have emitted more than \$1 billion tons of carbon from 1994–2023 will be required to pay.

Once again, I urge you to pass the RENEW Act to relieve taxpayers of the costs of climate change. Let's join New York and Vermont in this common-sense step towards climate resilience.