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Written Testimony
House Bill 128 - Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather
(RENEW) Act of 2025
Economic Matters Committee – January 23, 2025
Support

Background: House Bill 128 would establish the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program in the Department of the Environment to secure payments from certain businesses that extract fossil fuels or refine petroleum products in order to provide a source of revenue for State efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and to address the health impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations; establish the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund to support efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Written Comments: The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* means to repair the world in which we live. As the advocacy arm of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, we represent organizations that work to educate the community on sustainability and make strides towards repairing the world.

Maryland is facing a structural deficit, and the reality is that Maryland taxpayers are footing the bill for climate change. The goal of The RENEW Act is to bring in billions of new dollars to Maryland to help balance the budget and invest in climate solutions. These investments will pay dividends and ensure we stay on track to meet our climate mandates. Overburdened and underserved communities, including elderly populations, the underinsured, children, etc. are the most vulnerable to climate change impacts and extreme weather events. We, as a State, cannot continue to leave these vulnerable communities behind without dedicating specific funding to our ambitious, forward-thinking climate change mitigation, and adaptation programs in the state.

The RENEW Act takes this financial burden off of taxpayers and puts it squarely on the shoulders of the largest, most polluting international fossil fuel companies. It supports critical investments in programs that will provide necessary funding for health, infrastructure, equity, and urgent climate change mitigation and adaptation projects.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on HB128.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.