



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Members  
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus  
DATE: February 13, 2025  
RE: SB149 – Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme  
Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025

### **The MLLC Supports SB149 – Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of SB149.

The largest contributor to climate change are fossil fuels accounting for 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions and nearly 90 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions.<sup>1</sup> Multiple studies have found that climate change has a disparate impact on racially and socioeconomically marginalized communities. They experience higher climate-related health impacts including respiratory and cardiovascular disease, heat-related illness, and mortality. Climate change has particularly impacted the health of children, with children of color and in low-income families facing disproportionate health risks due to environmental exposures and social and economic stressors driven by housing conditions and food insecurity.<sup>2</sup>

Latino communities are disproportionately impacted by climate change due to where they work and live. Specific work sectors including agricultural, tourism, and labor are impacted by climate change to a greater extent than others. Latino workers over represent these work sectors.<sup>3</sup> According to the EPA, Latino communities are 43% more likely to currently live in areas where extreme temperatures are likely to reduce working hours thus impacting economic stability.<sup>4</sup> As Latinos make up 83% of farmworkers in the US, they are at an increased risk of dying from heat-related illnesses.<sup>5</sup>

This bill establishes a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program in the Department of the Environment to secure compensatory payments from fossil fuel businesses to provide revenue for state efforts to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts. Companies responsible for over 1 billion tons of emissions would owe payments with the total liability for all companies combined set at \$9 billion. These payments would go into a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund to support state infrastructure projects, health programs, and other efforts to address climate change.

<sup>1</sup> [Causes and Effects of Climate Change](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Racial Disparities in Climate Change-Related Health Effects in the United States](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The Climate Crisis Is a Latino Civil Rights Crisis](#)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

In particular, 40% of these funds must go towards communities disproportionately affected by climate impacts. This is a key provision in addressing the disparate impacts of climate change faced by racially and socioeconomically marginalized communities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on SB149.