

SB149 - FAVORABLE

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**SB 149 - Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather
(RENEW) Act of 2025**

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 13, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

I live in the Carole Highlands neighborhood of Prince George's County, in Legislative District 47B. My address is 7219 16th Ave, Takoma Park.

When people say they want the environment protected, we know it won't be free.

Part of the American ethos is that we sacrifice and take risks for our children. The RENEW Act is popular because Marylanders are willing to take a risk on an untested policy – that for ten years, the largest fossil-fuel companies should pay Maryland \$900 million per year of fees to pay for the damage their products are causing. (To give some context, Maryland's Motor Fuel Tax raises about \$1.3 billion per year.)

Economists at the Institute for Policy Integrity at the NYU School of Law studied the RENEW Act's concept and found that according to mainstream economic theory, passing this bill would not raise the price of gasoline. But "Polluter Pays" is good policy even if these economists are somehow wrong and some costs are passed on to us as consumers.

The General Assembly has adopted a tire recycling fee that is clearly passed on. It is considering a bill to have consumers pay a recycling fee directly when buying electronic devices. There are bills this year to apply responsibilities and costs to the producers of packaging materials and batteries, which could well raise the prices of those items.

The majority of Marylanders approve of these policies because we want to sacrifice to make a better future. We don't expect a better future for free.

Thinking about my own life, it was at the toughest times, when I lived on the smallest budget in the smallest apartment, that I'm the proudest of, because I worked hard, took calculated risks, saved every dime, and provided for my children's future.

I volunteer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund because we are proposing big plans to address one of humanity's biggest problems.

If you are doubtful about the RENEW Act, I ask to hear to your plan. States like Maryland have to lead for big problems to be addressed. What big thing do you think we should do to slow climate change?