



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

***Senate Bill 779
Climate Solutions Now Act Affordability Act of 2025***

Position: Oppose
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Date: February 27, 2025
From: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **OPPOSES** SB 779.

Bill Summary

Senate Bill 779 would modify Maryland's Environment Article laws to include the phrase "to the extent economically practicable" into various requirements. The bill inserts this language into the mention of existing law relating to building energy performance standards (BEPS) as well as other sections of greenhouse gas reduction laws.

Position Rationale

Senate Bill 779, as drafted, would not impact MDE as the Department always considers economic impacts in all proposed policies. However, in the legislation, there is no definition of "economically practicable" and therefore leaves ambiguity as to its interpretation. Therefore, potentially exposing the Department to legal challenges if an unreasonable interpretation is used.

Under Environment Article § 2-1206, MDE is required to produce plans to meet the state's climate change mitigation goals that will not only be economically practicable, but will be economically beneficial by producing net economic benefits to the State's economy and an increase in jobs. MDE estimated significant economic benefits would be created for Marylanders due to the policies included within the Climate Pollution Reduction Plan that was published in December 2023. One policy in the BEPS plan is expected to save Marylanders complying with the regulations an estimated \$4.5 billion by 2050. The Climate Pollution Reduction Plan's new policies as a whole were estimated to create \$1.2 billion in public health benefits, \$2.5 billion in increased personal income, and a net gain of 27,400 jobs by 2031.

Accordingly, MDE respectfully requests the Committee give an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT** to SB 779.