



SB0425

Environment - Coal Combustion By-Products - Fees, Coordinating Committee, and Regulations

Testimony before Education, Energy, and the Environment

Hearing February 11, 2025

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman, Co-Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, my name is Peter Alexander, and I represent the 900+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is also an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **in support of SB0425**, which would cut pollution from Maryland's highway system by investing in public transit, walking, and biking. We thank Senator Jackson for sponsoring this important legislation.

Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR, coal ash) pollution is a serious environmental and public health crisis here on Maryland. It is a problem that has only grown in urgency with new data revealing the widespread presence of legacy coal ash sites in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Coal ash contains hazardous pollutants, including arsenic, boron, cobalt, chromium, lead, lithium, mercury, radium, selenium, and other heavy metals which can leach into groundwater, surface water, and the air, posing severe health risks to nearby communities.

SB0425 will (1) Codify federal EPA regulations, (2) Expand Assessment Monitoring of toxic coal ash components, (3) Establish a Statewide CCR Coordination Committee, and (4) Change the current fee structure to ensure that MDE has funding to manage coal ash pollution.

SB0425 is a critical step toward protecting Maryland's drinking water, public health, and the Chesapeake Bay from the long-term threats of coal ash pollution.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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