



SB0149 - SUPPORT

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**SB0149- Responding to Emergency Needs from Extreme Weather
(RENEW) Act of 2025**

Joint Meeting of Education, Energy, and the Environment and Finance Committee
February 13th, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment and Finance Committees,

My name is Sonia Demiray, I am the Executive Director of the Climate Communications Coalition, a member of the Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition and the Maryland Climate Justice Wing. The Climate Communications Coalition strongly supports SB0149.

Requiring big polluters, who have knowingly harmed our climate and our environment, to pay a tiny portion to help remedy the consequences of their actions, is a logical step. Frankly, we should consider increasing the percentage of the profits taken. After all, cleaning up after yourself is not just a social norm, it can also be legally enforced as a crime or a tort. This also applies to pollution causing climate change: the extreme weather patterns and temperatures that we are witnessing today were predicted since the 1970's or earlier. Yet these same companies hid the data, lied to the public, and continued to rake in growing profits. And they continue to do so today.

This bill is popular because it would raise around \$9 billion and help solve the current funding problems largely caused by the polluters: Maryland is struggling to build up climate-resiliency, to heal the damage caused to our communities, and to protect communities, fauna, and flora from further harm. Polluters must pay for the consequences of their actions.

If there were an amendment to this bill, we suggest confiscating advertising, media, and communications budgets of the big polluters. These companies continue to pollute our air, waters and soils at the same time that they're funding massive misleading advertising campaigns positioning themselves as 'clean energy' or 'leading the way in clean energy research.' We suggest confiscating any portion of their production, media, and outreach budgets that would reach Maryland audiences, and use these funds to provide truthful and data-driven information about the climate emergency and public service campaigns that help generate resiliency in our communities. We need to prepare Marylanders for the impact of life-threatening and expensive weather events caused by these polluters. We urge a favorable report on SB0149.

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