

THE BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Board of Commissioners

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March 7, 2025

Delegate Marc A. Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 1088 - Coal Transportation Fee and Fossil Fuel Mitigation Fund (Coal Dust Cleanup and Asthma Remediation Act)

Dear Delegate Korman:

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County, I wish to express our opposition to House Bill 1088, titled "Coal Transportation Fee and Fossil Fuel Mitigation Fund (Coal Dust Cleanup and Asthma Remediation Act)." While the Bill aims to address important public health and environmental concerns, we believe the approach outlined in HB 1088 may not be the most effective or equitable solution for our state.

Firstly, the imposition of a coal transportation fee places an undue financial burden on industries that are already struggling with economic challenges. This fee could lead to increased costs for consumers and negatively impact the competitiveness of Maryland businesses, particularly those in the energy sector. It is important to consider the potential economic ramifications of such a fee on the livelihoods of those living and working in Garrett County and the overall economy of our state.

Secondly, the allocation of a \$13 per ton tax will cost Casselman Mine, the only underground mine operating in Garrett County, approximately \$2.25 million a year on the 179,000 tons of coal mined. Casselman Mine is a major employer in Garrett County employing over 100 people with plans to expand their operations and employ an additional 100 people.

While the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 requires net zero emissions by 2045 the State does not currently have the capacity to supplement coal for alternative energy sources. In addition, the coal mined at the Casselman mine is a high quality metallurgical coal used in the steel industry.

We urge you and your colleagues to reconsider House Bill 1088 and explore alternative solutions that balance the needs of public health, environmental protection, and economic stability. It is important to find a path forward that addresses these critical issues in a way that is fair and sustainable for all Maryland residents.

On behalf of the Board



Paul C. Edwards
Chairman

cc: Senate Mike McKay
Delegate Jim Hinebaugh