

Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB1258 – Consumer Goods- Restrictions Based on Energy Source – Prohibition (Energy Equality Act of 2025)
Organization: The Climate Mobilization, Montgomery County Chapter
Submitting: Karl Held
Position: Unfavorable
Hearing Date: February 11, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing The Climate Mobilization, Montgomery (TCM MoCo) testimony today in opposition to HB1258.

HB1258 would prohibit the state or local jurisdictions from restricting the sale, purchase or use of any tangible product based on the energy source it uses. That definition specifically includes motor vehicles and appliances. More broadly, it repeals the state’s low emissions vehicle program, Advanced Clean Cars II regulations and Advanced Clean Trucks regulations. These regulations require vehicle manufacturers to sell an increasing percentage of zero emission cars, trucks, delivery vans and school buses from Model Year 2027 through 2035 and are based on the California Air Resources Board’s (CARB) rules. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) adopted the CARB rules under the authority of the Maryland Clean Cars Act of 2007 and Clean Trucks Act of 2023.

The transportation sector is Maryland’s number one generator of greenhouse gas emissions¹ and vehicles of all sizes are significant emitters of other toxic pollutants as well. Gasoline-fueled vehicles account for 76 percent of GHG emissions from the on-road transportation sector, as indicated in Maryland’s 2020 Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Under MDE’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan, the Advanced Clean Cars II and Advanced Clean Trucks programs are key policies needed for Maryland to meet its climate targets. Indeed MDE has called the Advanced Clean Cars II program “our single largest existing climate pollution reduction strategy over the long term.”

Trucks and other large vehicles constitute only 9 percent of vehicles on our roads but contribute 21 percent of carbon pollutants but a whopping 48 percent of small particulate matter (PM2.5) that gets trapped in lungs and can be found in the blood stream, leading to systemic impacts, including cardiovascular inflammation and function.

In addition, high levels of ozone and even small levels of particle pollution can lead to significant adverse health consequences. Both ozone and particle pollution can cause premature births and death, asthma attacks, heart attacks, strokes, and impaired cognitive function later in life. Particle pollution can also cause lung cancer.

The enforcement of the Advanced Clean Cars II regulations does not start until MY2027. The

¹ <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/climatechange/pages/greenhousegasinventory.aspx>

enforcement of Advanced Clean Trucks regulations does not start until MY2030, providing even more time for the market, including manufacturers and dealerships, to adjust and for appropriate charging facilities to expand. While Maryland's regulations must remain identical to California's regulations, MDE has complete discretion over the application of penalties to manufacturers should any be necessary.

Providing a clear, consistent regulatory framework promotes market and business certainty and adjustment. It reduces risk and accelerates any needed business investments. Maryland should not introduce uncertainty into this market. Businesses do not like uncertainty or change. But our world is changing and the adverse health impacts of pollutants only accelerates as climate warming accelerates.

With larger numbers of manufacturers offering qualifying vehicles, consumers and businesses have more options at more price points.² With continued expansion of publically available vehicle charging stations and improved range, range anxiety is decreasing. We have every reason to believe that the goals under Advanced Clean Cars II and the Advance Trucks Rule will also be attainable. It is premature to revoke these two programs to clean Maryland's air and reduce Maryland's carbon emissions.

For these reasons, TCM MoCo opposes HB1258 and urges an UNFAVORABLE report in Committee. Thank you.

² Options even for electric semis are increasing. Scania, Volvo, Freightliner and Tesla all offer models.