



SIERRA CLUB

MARYLAND CHAPTER

P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB 1088, Coal Transportation Fee and Fossil Fuel Mitigation Fund (Coal Dust Cleanup and Asthma Remediation Act)

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 11, 2025

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report on HB 1088, the Coal Dust Cleanup and Asthma Remediation Act. Railroad companies transport coal through Maryland in uncovered cars, spreading coal dust pollution along rail lines, despoiling environments, and impairing the health of people living nearby. When the coal is burned at its ultimate destination, the process releases greenhouse gases that warm the planet and cause climate change. HB 1088 makes the carriers accountable for these harms by assessing fees for transporting coal in Maryland.

The coal transportation fee is set at \$13 per short ton of coal transported in the state; however, no fee will be charged for coal transported solely for use on a farm. The fees will be deposited in a newly established Fossil Fuel Mitigation Fund administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Fee collections are estimated at \$250-300 million per year.

MDE will primarily use the Fund to support actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At least 40% of the program funds must be used for activities that address the impacts of climate change on overburdened and underserved communities, including asthma treatment programs

The bill will place no financial burden on the state. To the contrary, the fees assessed by the bill will supply almost 30% of the estimated annual \$1 billion required to carry out Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan. The Plan, which lays out steps that Maryland can take to achieve its statutorily-required climate goals of a 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2031 and net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, includes important components like building electrification programs, deployment of EV charging systems, and expansion of public transit.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club requests a favorable report on HB 1088.

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