



Bill: HB 340- Climate Change - Attorney General Actions, Climate Change Restitution Fund, and Climate Change Restitution Fund Advisory Council

Position: OPPOSE

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Energy Solutions, Inc. (MCIES) is a coalition of diverse stakeholders, including representatives from organized labor, manufacturing, energy production, transportation, and public utilities. Together, we are advocating for the inclusivity of all energy types, including natural gas, renewable natural gas, hydrogen, propane, and nuclear power. Please accept this letter in opposition of House Bill 340.

HB 340 proposes to empower the Maryland Attorney General to pursue legal action against large, publicly traded energy companies deriving at least 50% of their revenues from coal, oil, or gas. Additionally, it establishes the Climate Change Restitution Fund and an advisory council to allocate resources. While the bill aims to address environmental concerns, it will have negative consequences on the state's economy.

Maryland-based energy companies and those operating within the state could face heightened legal scrutiny, leading to significant legal costs and financial liabilities. These additional burdens will likely result in increased operating costs and reduced investment during a time when the state is actively working to encourage energy infrastructure development. It is also unknown whether such costs would be passed to consumers who are already experiencing high utility bills. Further, if the bill were to pass, it would most certainly face immediate legal scrutiny.

HB 340's provisions also create an environment of uncertainty that could deter investment in energy infrastructure, including emerging technologies that support Maryland's climate goals. A diversified energy approach is essential for maintaining a stable energy market. The energy sector plays a vital role in Maryland's economy, supporting thousands of jobs and contributing to state revenue. If companies are forced to cut back operations or withdraw investments, Maryland's economy will be impacted by loss of jobs and decreased economic activity.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you oppose HB 340.

Sincerely,

Sarah Peters
Executive Director