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☎ 877-636-2872

📍 7229 Parkway Drive, Suite 200 | Hanover, MD 21076

Governor | Wes Moore Lt. Governor | Aruna Miller Secretary | Russell J. Strickland

**LETTER OF INFORMATION - HB 340**  
**Climate Change - Attorney General Actions, Climate Change Restitution Fund, and Climate Change Restitution Fund Advisory Council**  
Health and Government Operations  
Hearing Date: 11 FEB 2025

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes to **provide information on HB 340 - Climate Change - Attorney General Actions, Climate Change Restitution Fund, and Climate Change Restitution Fund Advisory Council**. The bill requires the Maryland Office of Resilience within the Department of Emergency Management to administer a new Climate Change Restitution Fund and to staff a new Climate Change Restitution Fund Advisory Council.

The Maryland Office of Resilience (MOR) is authorized by statute to, among other duties, coordinate State and local efforts to build resilience to risks identified in the Maryland Hazard Mitigation Plan and to develop a State Resilience Strategy. Since standing up in 2024, MOR has crosswalked over a dozen different plans that cover resilience and met with agencies across the state to evaluate needs. The Office is currently gathering input from sector-specific workgroups, one-on-one interviews, and surveys from government, nonprofit, academic, and community groups engaged in the work of resilience. As part of the strategy, MOR will be proposing high-level resilience metrics, which will enable tracking of investment and performance across the State. The Restitution Fund could be an effective tool to support investment in resilience projects across Maryland communities.

The bill also requires MOR to establish a Climate Change Restitution Fund Advisory Council. The requirements of the new organization overlap significantly with the existing Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC). The mission of the MCCC is to advise the Governor and General Assembly on ways to, “mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change” ([Environment Article §2-1301](#)). The Commission includes many of the same State agencies and also includes nongovernmental members with insight into the impacts of climate change on various sectors including business and labor, environmental advocacy, academia, and philanthropy. The MCCC also has near identical reporting requirements as outlined for the new body; the MCCC is required to report annually on the State’s efforts to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change, including future plans and recommendations for legislation. Combined with MOR’s existing reporting requirements, including plans to increase resilience in 1-, 2-, 5-, and 10-year increments, and potential funding sources for the plans, the reporting requirements for the new advisory body would largely be redundant. The legislation also would require MDEM to establish the advisory

body ahead of any successful legal action and monies available through the restitution fund, requiring general funds to sustain the effort. As such, in order to reduce redundancy or potential conflict in advising on the uses of the Climate Change Restitution Fund, and the need for additional general funds prior to any successful legal action, MDEM recommends that MOR administer the Fund in consultation with the MCCC and that the Advisory Body and associated reporting requirements (beginning on page 5, line 11 through page 9, line 15) be removed.

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Sierra, MDEM legislative liaison:  
[anna.sierra1@maryland.gov](mailto:anna.sierra1@maryland.gov).