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*Joint Committees*  
Senate Chair, Audit and Evaluation  
Senate Chair, Pensions

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN**  
**SB 116 - BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS – CONTRACT REVIEW –**  
**CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY INFORMATION**

Maryland has adopted ambitious climate goals, including greenhouse gas emissions reduction and net-zero carbon targets. However, without systematic assessment of how state contracts align with these goals, we risk making procurement decisions that inadvertently undermine our environmental commitments. Currently, the Board of Public Works approves billions of dollars in contracts and agreements annually across construction, leasing, architectural services, and other categories. These decisions have significant long-term implications for our state's carbon footprint, the climate resilience of state infrastructure, leadership in sustainable procurement, and stewardship of taxpayer resources.

Senate Bill 116 establishes a straightforward disclosure requirement. Before the Board approves contracts or agreements in eight key categories, agencies must provide relevant climate and sustainability information, including: (1) how the contract or agreement contributes to Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction and net-zero goals, (2) how the contract or agreement accounts for climate change adaptation and extreme weather events over the lifespan of the project, (3) how the contract or agreement advances Maryland's position as a climate leader through sustainable sourcing, (4) how the contract or agreement aligns with Maryland Green Purchasing Committee standards and (5) Green Building Council guidelines, (6) how the contract or agreement complies with high-performance building requirements, and (7) how the contract or agreement is consistent with the Building Energy Performance Standards.

The bill ensures that Board members have complete information when approving major expenditures. Climate impacts should be as transparent as cost and timeline considerations. Moreover, by requiring disclosure, SB 116 creates accountability mechanisms that help ensure state procurement decisions support rather than hinder Maryland's environmental commitments. Climate-resilient infrastructure and energy-efficient designs also generally cost

less over their lifetime. This transparency helps identify projects that save taxpayer money while protecting the environment.

Environmental information should already be part of good project planning and agencies developing contracts should understand the ecological implications as part of responsible stewardship. The bill makes this information transparent to decision-makers and the public. The bill also avoids encumbering procurement decisions by requiring environmental information only “to the extent applicable,” thus recognizing that not every contract will have climate implications. This approach avoids unnecessary paperwork and delays, while capturing critical information when it matters.

In short, Senate Bill 116 represents common-sense governance. It ensures that when Maryland spends public money on contracts worth millions or billions of dollars, we do so with full awareness of the environmental implications. As Maryland faces increasing climate challenges, from sea level rise to extreme heat and flooding, every state decision matters. This bill helps ensure our procurement decisions are part of the solution, not part of the problem. Thank you for considering Senate Bill 116.