



Senate Bill 373
Education, Energy and the Environment
Oppose
February 12, 2026

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to make comments. The American Lung Association strongly opposes Senate Bill 373 which would repeal Maryland's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). The Lung Association believes that Maryland must continue its participation in RGGI to make meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that would protect the health and well-being of Marylanders.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education and advocacy. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to improve the air we breathe; to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families; and to eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases.

The American Lung Association's [2025 State of the Air¹](#) report revealed that 46% of Americans, more than 156 million people live in counties that had unhealthy levels of ozone and/or particle pollution. In Maryland there were mixed results with three counties receiving a failing grade for high ozone pollution and another ten counties receiving a 'C' or lower for unhealthy levels of ozone or particle pollution. Ozone and particle pollution can harm the health of all Maryland residents and of particular risk are children, older adults, pregnant people, and those living with chronic diseases – approximately 81,000 children and 520,000 adults are living with asthma in Maryland and another 270,000 are managing other lung illnesses. Both ozone and particle pollution can cause premature death and other serious health effects such as asthma attacks, cardiovascular damage, and developmental and reproductive harm.

Climate change is one of the most urgent threats to human health of the 21st century. Reduction of harmful pollutants caused by burning fossil fuels and other combustion is critical to improving the local health today and ensuring a stable climate for future generations. Climate change is first and foremost a public health issue and one that creates disproportionate impacts across Maryland's diverse communities. Further, climate change is making the job of cleaning our air much more difficult as temperatures rise and drive conditions for unhealthy ozone pollution days, among other health challenges.

The American Lung Association supports measures to reduce all emissions that contribute to climate change. Such measure should include but are not limited to transitioning away from fossil fuels to increased use of clean, non-combustion, renewable energy sources and zero-emission transportation technologies, expanding energy conservation and efficiency measures and establishing enforceable and science-based limits on emissions for all sectors including industrial, energy, commercial, residential and transportation. We support measures to reduce other outdoor air pollutants while reducing emissions that cause climate change.

In 2007, Maryland joined RGGI. RGGI is a collaborative effort among states in the Eastern part of the country to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from power plants in each participating state. The participating states include Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Together these states have established a regional cap on CO2 emissions, essentially setting a limit on the emissions from regulated power plants in the given states. Over time these caps will decline and so will CO2 and other harmful emissions.² For example, a July 2020 study published in the journal Environmental Health Perspectives concluded, based on particle pollution reductions, “RGGI has provided considerable child health benefits to participating and neighboring states beyond those conventionally considered. Moreover, those health benefits are estimated to have significant economic value.”³

Participation in RGGI allows for CO2 emissions to decline in a planned and predictable way to protect health and safeguard our children’s future. Since RGGI started emissions have already reduced more than 50%. Through the auction process, it allows funds to be raised to be reinvested into local communities.²

The American Lung Association believes that all people are entitled to breathe healthy air and to be free of the adverse health effects of air pollution. We support the protection of all people from the harm of air pollution, especially those who suffer disproportionate exposure from local sources of emissions. We recognize that major sources of air pollution are often located near where many people, especially communities of color or lower income, live and work which means their exposure to pollutants emitted can be more immediate and disproportionately harmful.

The Lung Association strongly opposes efforts to repeal Maryland’s participation in RGGI through Senate Bill 373 and encourages Maryland to continue the commitment to fight climate change and remain actively participating in RGGI.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and if you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at aleks.casper@lung.org or 202-719-2810.

Sincerely,



Aleks Casper
Director of Advocacy, Maryland
American Lung Association



¹ American Lung Association. State of the Air Report, 2025. Available at: <https://www.lung.org/research/sota>

² The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative 101 Fact Sheet. September 2021.

https://www.rggi.org/sites/default/files/Uploads/Fact%20Sheets/RGGI_101_Factsheet.pdf

³ Frederica Perera, David Cooley, Alique Berberian, David Mills, and Patrick Kinney. Co-Benefits to Children’s Health of the U.S. Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Environmental Health Perspectives 128:7 CID: 077006 <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP6706>.

See also, ABT Associates. Analysis of the Public Health Impacts of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, 2009–2014. 2017.

<https://www.abtassociates.com/insights/publications/report/analysis-of-the-public-health-impacts-of-the-regional-greenhouse-gas-0>