

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Testimony on: HB1199- Study on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Economy-Wide Cap-and-Invest Program (Maryland Climate Crisis Equity Act)**

**Submitting: Deborah A. Cohn**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: March 4, 2026**

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members

I am urging support of HB1199 – Study on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Economy-Wide Cap-and-Invest Program Maryland Climate Crisis Equity Act.

Maryland is not on target to meet its climate targets. The impacts of climate change are intensifying, and Maryland residents are facing very steep increases in energy costs. An economy-wide cap and-invest program could help address these challenges. Cap-and-invest is a market-driven solution that sets a declining cap on greenhouse gas emission levels, requires producers of greenhouse gases to acquire and retire emission allowances, and invests the money from the sale of allowances into the Maryland economy to accelerate greenhouse gas reductions, address the costs of climate change and reduce energy costs. The study called for by HB1199 has been recommended by the [Maryland Commission on Climate Change](#).

Maryland already participates in the successful market driven RGGI cap-and-invest program that limits carbon emissions from electricity generation. HB1199 would require a study to evaluate design options and implications of an economy-wide market driven cap and-invest program to reduce Maryland greenhouse gas emissions. Funding for the study would be provided from the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) with these costs reimbursed to the SEIF from revenue generated by a cap-and-invest program implemented by June 30, 2030.

Like RGGI, an economy wide cap-and-invest program could raise significant funds, potentially close to \$1 billion per year. These revenues could be invested in (i) reducing Maryland greenhouse gas emissions, (ii) reducing energy bills, particularly for low- and moderate-income households, (iii) enhancing resilience of the state's economy, communities, and ecosystems to climate impacts and extreme weather, and (iv) workforce development. Accordingly, if well designed, an economy wide cap-and-invest program could reduce emissions, lower energy bills, reinvest billions into Maryland's economy while supporting employment and thus tax revenues.

For these reasons, I urge this Committee to issue a FAVORABLE report on HB1199.