

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Testimony on: HB1040 - “Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund – Mandated Uses – Climate Change Programs”**

**Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George’s**

**Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: March 3, 2026**



Dear Mr. Chairperson and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony to HB1040, “Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund – Mandated Uses – Climate Change Programs”, which requires the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) to be used for certain purposes to mitigate climate change causes. Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change-causing pollution in our schools, and our group is active in Prince George’s County. In particular, we recently worked directly with Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a first in the national School Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP).

The SEIF has supported a wide range of programs to drive clean energy and energy efficiency while lowering costs for Marylanders, and has the potential to do much more to build an equitable and resilient future. These funds should not be diverted. We chose to assign these funds to programs that reduce the energy impact on ourselves and our children. Sweeping these funds would just be another in our children’s futures. We need to do what is right and invest in lowering the cost of energy and mitigating climate pollution.

We are particularly thankful for the inclusion of specific allocations in HB 1040.

- State Government Article 9–20B–05 (f)(14)(I)(6) would allow for appropriate locations, including our schools to develop in to resiliency hubs in order to power themselves with cleaner energy and keep the lights on during future disasters.
- State Government Article 9–20B–05 (f)(14)(III)(1) would also allow for continued investment by school systems in net-zero schools and other mitigating infrastructure. PGCPS is a state leader when it comes to zero emissions ground source heat pump installation, and is progressing towards net-zero buildings this will accelerate the progress on that front and be a boon to the other LEAs.
- State Government Article 9–20B–05 (f)(14)(III)(2) would also allow for continued investment by school systems in electric school buses. This is important for the LEAs to purchase vehicles that positively impact the health of students and drivers that use them for transportation. We also find the language allows for the purchase of charging infrastructure, which has been a particular challenge for PGCPS.
- State Government Article 9–20B–05 (f)(14)(I)(3) could also allow for continued investment by school systems in electric school buses.

First and foremost the SEIF needs to be maintained as a source for funds to electrify our economy for the future and mitigate the impact of our emissions on our children’s climate. HB1040 does take this important step into the future and crucially allocates funds to several important programs that will accelerate the change at our school systems, saving them on energy costs in the long-term and showing the children that Maryland acts to make their futures better.

We encourage a **FAVORABLE** report for this important legislation.