



Testimony on: SB0432 – Attorney General Actions and Climate Crimes
Accountability Fund (Climate Crimes Accountability Act)
Committee: Judicial Proceedings
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today on SB0432. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of 32 grassroots and professional organizations focused on climate justice, urges you to vote favorably on SB0432.

The Climate Crimes Accountability Act (SB0432) authorizes the Maryland Attorney General to investigate, commence, prosecute or defend any action by large fossil fuel companies (market capitalization above \$1 billion) for any unlawful conduct (civil or criminal) that has contributed to climate change. Furthermore, SB0432 waives Maryland’s Uniform Contribution Among Joint Tortfeasors Act (UCADA) for actions brought under this bill. Waiving UCADA, facilitates settlements with one or more of the parties held responsible for climate damages. It allows a judge or jury to determine comparative responsibility rather than encouraging additional lawsuits among liable parties to determine relative financial responsibility. This is what was done to hold the responsible parties accountable for the 2024 Key Bridge collapse. SB0432 also allows the Attorney General to hire outside counsel and establishes a special “Climate Restitution Fund” to hold any payments collected through successful actions.

Lawsuits have been filed across the country to hold polluters responsible and to make them pay for climate change impacts affecting many communities. Maryland has ample examples of how climate change has and is affecting our communities from severe flooding to sea level rise to drought. Taxpayers across the state are being forced to bear the cost of addressing these impacts.

It has been well documented that fossil fuel companies like ExxonMobil have known since the 1970’s about the impacts of climate change. According to a [2023 Harvard study](#), Exxon researchers created models and analyses that predicted with remarkable accuracy that carbon dioxide emissions would lead to global warming. Despite, and perhaps because of this knowledge, fossil fuel companies sought to withhold this information. Worse yet, they instigated an organized campaign to mislead the public, and like tobacco companies, disparage experts who tried to sound the alarm with real scientific information.

Because of the harm that burning fossil fuels has caused, we need to make the largest companies who caused it pay for the damage from their “climate crimes.” The Attorney General supports SB0432 and it is one of his top two priorities this session. For these reasons we ask for a FAVORABLE report.

- 350MoCo
- Adat Shalom Climate Action
- Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry
- Chesapeake Earth Holders
- Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Climate Communications Coalition
- Climate Parents of Prince George's
- Climate Reality Greater Maryland
- ClimateXChange
- Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists
- DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
- Echotopia
- Elders Climate Action Maryland
- Fix Maryland Rail
- Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
- Greenbelt Climate Action Network
- HoCoClimateAction
- Howard County Indivisible
- Maryland Legislative Coalition
- Maryland Energy Advocates
- Maryland Third Act
- Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund
- Mobilize Frederick
- Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Montgomery Countryside Alliance
- Mountain Maryland Movement
- Nuclear Information & Resource Service
- Progressive Maryland
- Safe & Healthy Playing Fields
- Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
- The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter
- Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland