

Committee: Judicial Proceedings
Testimony on: SB0432 Attorney General Actions and Climate Crimes Accountability Fund (Climate Crimes Accountability Act)
Submitted by: Donald M. Goldberg, Executive Director
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Dear Chairman and Co-chair:

Climate Law & Policy Project (CLPP) is a Maryland-based nonprofit research organization that works to develop and promote sound and safe policies to slow, stop, and ultimately reverse the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and ensure that vulnerable communities are protected from climate impacts that cannot be avoided. CLPP supports SB0432.

SB0432 would authorize the Attorney General to investigate or pursue litigation against big fossil fuel companies for any tortious or otherwise unlawful conduct that has contributed to climate change and the climate impacts being inflicted upon Marylanders. This is basic authority that Maryland's Attorney General should have to be able to protect Marylanders and to seek to place the cost burden of climate impacts where it belongs — on the big polluters who are responsible. The bill also provides the Attorney General with important flexibility, including being able to hire outside counsel and exempting the litigation from the Maryland Uniform Contribution Among Joint Tortfeasors Act (UCATA).

In addition, the bill creates a Fund, consisting of money received as a result of such litigation, to pay for programs that prevent, mitigate, or repair harms caused by climate change.

In short, this bill is about basic accountability and about ensuring that the costs of climate impacts caused by big polluters do not fall on the shoulders of state residents.

CLPP respectfully urges a favorable report on this bill.