



**Testimony on:** HB0572 – Attorney General Actions and Climate Crimes  
Accountability Fund (Climate Crimes Accountability Act)  
**Committee:** Judiciary  
**Organization:** Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing  
**Submitting:** Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair  
**Position:** Favorable  
**Hearing Date:** February 17, 2026

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today on HB0572. 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 HB0572.

The Climate Crimes Accountability Act (HB0572) 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, HB0572 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. HB0572 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

HB0572 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