



TESTIMONY FOR HB0572

Attorney General Actions and Climate Crimes Accountability Fund (Climate Crimes Accountability Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Ruth

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0572 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

For decades, fossil fuel companies withheld and denied evidence that their products were harming the environment. When data was finally released showing their callous disregard for the crisis they had created, they publicly touted that they would 'invest' billions in restoring the environment.

That investment seems to have been in making plastics, which has harmed our environment even more, as well as running campaigns to make us think that natural gas is somehow clean and not a fossil fuel. They have also invested a great deal of money trying to get us to believe that if we can invest in carbon capture methods, they can continue to produce fossil fuels.

Their actions to date have been governed solely by their desire to make as much profit as possible without solving the crisis that is pushing our society towards extinction and has caused property damage, weakened our food system, and caused many, many deaths. It is more than time to call them to account.

This bill will allow the Attorney General to prosecute fossil fuel corporations that are worth more than \$1,000,000,000 and derive at least 50% of their revenues from the production or sale of fossil fuels for the harm they have caused and are continuing to cause. It also establishes the Climate Crimes Accountability Fund to use the monies from any judgements from cases involving the fossil fuel companies to mitigate or repair the harm caused by fossil fuels.

Since these corporations don't seem to be able to make the proper investments in truly solving this crisis, we should be able to take back some of their profits to do what needs to be done.

Our members are very enthusiastic in support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.