

SB 887 - Electric Generation - Transition From Fossil Fuels - Carbon Dioxide Emissions Rate and Transition Account

Corey Johns

Support

Dear Madam Chair, Mr. vice-chair, members of the Finance Committee and joining today's hearing, members of the education, health and environmental affairs committee:

My name is Corey Johns and I am testifying in support of SB 887. It is time for Maryland to move away from coal plants.

I can give you some numbers, which you already know. 14-percent of the energy produced in Maryland is produced by the coal plants while they produce over 70-percent of the air pollution in the state. According to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, a healthy bay itself is worth nearly \$130 billion from increased property values, increase recreational opportunities, more productive farmlands and other industries that rely on the Bay.

But it is the last set of statistics that explain to you why this legislation means so much to me. 88-percent of Marylanders live in areas with unhealthy air based on EPA Standards. Eight Counties received an F smog ratings from the American Lung Association.

And Maryland has 500,000 asthma sufferers, including myself. And that is why I have become involved in learning about and supportive of this plan to move away from coal in Maryland.

I live in Eastern Baltimore County, District 6. I have asthma. In the summer, when people are cutting the grass, sometimes it is difficult to even go outside. My dad also has asthma and deals with the same struggles. I am a bit fortunate in that the coal plant that was in my district has closed, but we still have the double site right over the key bridge with the smoke hovering over Eastern Baltimore County. Combined with the coal plant that used to be in Essex for so long, where I live routinely ranks among the worst air quality in the state and has a very high number of asthmatics and people with other breathing difficulties. Those coal plants certainly have played a factor in that.

Again, half the battle is complete with the coal plant in Essex having been closed recently, but there are still six more we need to move away from.

I want to move forward knowing the air quality of where I live will get better and not worse. I want to know that if I have kids in the future they won't be incredibly likely to develop asthma or other breathing issues because of the polluted air. For the health benefit of people who live where I live, future generations of where I live, and for the health benefit of all the Marylanders affected by the coal plants throughout the state, I ask you to please favorably support SB 887 to move Maryland away from these coal plants.

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