

BILL: SB 912
TITLE: Climate Crisis and Education Act
POSITION: SUPPORT
HEARING DATE: 3/11/2020
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation
SPONSOR: Senator Benjamin Kramer

As a constituent and voter in District 42B and student at the University of Maryland, I strongly support the Climate Crisis and Education Act. As a biology student and plant science researcher, I am acutely aware of the threats to human and environmental health posed by climate change and believe that equitable carbon pricing measures passed by progressive states will initiate change for the better.

The health and safety of Maryland's parks is threatened by climate change. Extreme weather events due to climate change are already causing mature oaks to die of root damage and infectious fungal disease in Maryland and the DC area, as reported by the Takoma Park Service in Maryland in 2019. These damaging effects are destroying the historic willow oaks that line University of Maryland's campus. I also fear for the trees of Gunpowder Falls State Park, where I grew up canoeing on the Gunpowder River and hiking through the forests. These forests shield the river from water pollutants, provide outdoor recreation for Marylanders, and need our protection.

With warmer temperatures, insects whose populations are ordinarily reduced during winter freezes experience population booms. This increases the survival rates of many insect species, including agricultural pests and disease-transmitting mosquitoes. We are encountering mosquito-borne illnesses that threaten Marylanders who work outdoors or enjoy outdoor recreation. Conditions in Maryland are becoming hospitable to mosquito vectors of tropical diseases such as Dengue fever, posing a real public health risk to Marylanders.

Climate change has immediate and detrimental implications for Marylanders today. We need to take action, by using market forces to drive down fossil fuel usage and encourage renewable alternatives. The Climate Crisis and Education Act will let Maryland lead the way for climate action in other states and at the federal level. Our efforts to stop climate change will protect our natural spaces and public health.

For these reasons and more, I, Madison Plunkert, urge a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 912.

Respectfully submitted,
Madison Plunkert
acClimateMD
410-493-5778