

HJ0001_FAV_SarahLesher

Madam Speaker and Members of the House of Delegates:

I urge favorable consideration of HJ0001, "Declaration of a Climate Emergency and Implementation of a Climate Mobilization Effort."

Unfortunately in spite of repeated warnings from climate experts about the existential crisis our planet is facing, as well as weekly evidence of severe events from widespread bushfires, "sunny day" flooding in Miami and elsewhere, interior flooding so extensive much farmland couldn't be planted and many stored crops were destroyed, ice loss from Antarctic and Greenland glaciers, Arctic villages sinking into melting permafrost, and local tornadoes in February, there is a widespread denial from President Trump and his administration and too many others that human-caused climate change is occurring.

Governor Hogan's administration has not really embraced the problem and is exacerbating it by promoting shale gas pipelines and infrastructure that add to greenhouse gas during fracking extraction and then from leaks in pipelines and finally from leaks inside houses, including one I can smell inside my kitchen but Washington Gas cannot trace.

Unless there is a World War II level of mobilization to address the climate emergency, global temperatures will rise to a level that will cause ever more severe refugee crises because of conflict over water and food and other resources. In an already polarized nation and world more protests, civil wars, violence will erupt.

"Business as usual" may seem easier in the very short term, but denial is already difficult given what we see happening now as a result of human generated greenhouse gases.

Many local jurisdictions are setting bold goals to address the climate crisis. They could argue that there is no point in action unless the whole planet acts in concert, but they realize that someone must start and lead to encourage others to follow.

I urge the Maryland House of Delegates to follow the examples set by the city of Takoma Park, Montgomery County, and other counties and cities including several in neighboring Virginia.

--Sarah Leshar

sarah.lesher@gmail.com

9728 Hedin Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20903 301-526-4148