



**Testimony in Support of SB 76
Climate Crisis and Education Act (Sen. Kramer)
FAVORABLE**

February 2, 2021

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

On behalf of Strong Future Maryland, we write in support of SB 76. Strong Future Maryland works to advance bold, progressive policy changes to address systemic inequality and promote a sustainable, just and prosperous economic future for all Marylanders.

Just two weeks ago, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a 2018 lawsuit filed by Baltimore City, which argues that fossil fuel companies ought to be held accountable for the impacts of climate change.

We agree. In the same vein, this legislation ensures that fossil fuels are held accountable for the real costs they are imposing on our climate, oceans, and health. By creating a Climate Crisis Infrastructure Fund and ensuring that entities who bring fossil fuels into the state are contributing to offset the resulting impacts of that combustion, we are helping to address global warming while weaning our state off of fossil fuels. In addition, we are putting Maryland in a position of leadership on climate legislation and in technological innovation for the future, and investing in our children's future.

Our planet is in the midst of an unprecedented climate crisis, caused by the unsafe and poorly-mitigated burning of fossil fuels. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has made it overwhelmingly clear that we now have less than 10 years to reduce our climate-disrupting emissions to levels that will avoid the worst impacts of a warming planet. This means the world must cut greenhouse gas emissions dramatically and keep warming below 1.5 degrees celsius to avoid the threat of irreversible climate destabilization. Importantly, the targets set in this legislation to address climate change are consistent with scientific understanding, in particular and at a minimum, the findings of the 2018 IPCC report and the Paris 2015 Agreement goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5oC.

As one of the wealthiest states in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, and a location that is uniquely susceptible to changing weather patterns, Maryland has a responsibility to lead with aggressive pollution reduction plans and policies. Maryland must do more for climate action — in the name of environmental justice, for the health of our communities, and for the future of our families. This committee can make a commitment to that work by issuing a favorable report on SB 76.

John B. King Jr.

Alice Wilkerson

Founder and Board Chair

Executive Director