

February 16, 2021

Bill: HB 33
Title: Climate Crisis and Education Act
Position: Support
Hearing date: 2/18/2021
Committee: Economic Matters
Sponsor: Del. David Fraser-Hidalgo

I am a 45-year resident of Montgomery County, MD and a long-time supporter of green energy. I believe this bill is hugely important and especially timely. It offers many benefits for Maryland residents: an estimated infusion of \$350 million per year into education; protections for energy-related local jobs; help for the communities that face the brunt of climate change, and more.

But the most important benefit is the hundreds of millions of dollars that will go into projects to mitigate greenhouse gases under the bill's Climate Crisis and Infrastructure Fund. Because right now, we need a LOT of mitigation to save our environment.

Major wind-energy projects from New England to Virginia are behind schedule from regulatory delays and covid-19 challenges. That includes the 120-megawatt Skipjack off the coast of Ocean City, MD. Meanwhile, on land, proposed solar farms face strong NIMBY (not in my backyard) opposition. Just last week, the Montgomery County Council voted down a proposal that would have permitted small community solar farms in the county's 93,000-acre agricultural preserve. NIMBY pressure killed the plan.

Across the country and overseas, wind and solar projects are being scuttled by local residents crying NIMBY. We need strong governmental backing to create green projects and technologies that can mitigate fossil fuel emissions. And we need governmental backing to move these projects from the drawing board into reality. This bill's Climate Crisis and Infrastructure Fund will help fund and accelerate the shift away from fossil fuels. And the bill will make fossil fuel companies, whose products created the climate crisis, pay for that shift through market-based mechanisms. I think the bill's ability to mitigate climate change needs to be expanded and spotlighted.

For these reasons and more I urge that HB 33 be FAVORABLY REPORTED.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cc: Members of the Economic Matters Committee