



HB33 – Climate Crisis and Education Act

Testimony before House Economic Matters Committee

February 18, 2021

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Madame Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Richard Deutschmann, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in support of HB33, which will put a price on carbon in the state, while funding education, clean energy programs and a direct rebate. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members).

The world's leading climate scientists warn that we have 10 short years to dramatically reduce our climate-disrupting emissions. Historic Ellicott City Maryland has suffered not just one, but two – 1000-year floods in the last 4 years, wiping out numerous long-standing business in its wake. And the Washington Post reported just this week on the potential catastrophic affects that sea level rise will have on Anne Arundel County's 530 miles of shoreline.



We have the solutions and the technological answers to this problem, we just need the political will to make it happen. Economists widely agree that one of the most elegant and market friendly ways to do this is by putting a price on carbon. Once this fee is applied to all forms of carbon, it sends a signal to the market that the economic conditions are ripe for deploying of low-carbon alternatives, and the market accelerates clean energy alternatives.

HB33 does just that, setting a price on carbon entering the state. But it goes much further, by using these funds raised in 3 ways. First, it helps to fund expanding educational opportunities and school construction in the state. Second, it will provide funding for our most successful clean energy programs. And finally, it helps to offset the cost to consumers, by providing a direct dividend back to our citizens. The benefits begin with real and tangible reductions to our emissions of greenhouse gases, and directly taking on the biggest contributor to global climate change from our state. Passage of this bill will have numerous public health benefits. The use of fossil fuels for our energy and transportation need has well-known detrimental impacts to our air and water, including the emission of mercury, lead, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxides and particulates into our air, and well contamination from fracked gas sites and other water pollution from the use of liquid fuels such as gasoline. The impacts include nearly all Marylanders living in an EPA non-attainment area for air quality, and high rates of asthma and other deadly lung

diseases. These affects are disproportionately felt by our economically disadvantaged citizens of the state. Cleaning up this air and water pollution will have profound positive health impacts for our children and future generations, and will reduce health care costs across the state. Finally, educational funding and clean energy deployment will both increase steeply with this legislation, which will have the added benefit of putting a dividend in consumer's pocket.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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