



# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 66

Electric Generation - Transition From Fossil Fuels - Carbon Dioxide Emissions Rate and Transition Plan  
and Fund (Maryland Coal Community Transition Act of 2021)

Economic Matters Committee

2/17/2021

Good afternoon Chair Davis, Vice Chair Dumais, and members of the Economic Matters Committee. My name is Rev. Linda Boyd and I am representing GREENCRACE, the parishioner-led environmental advisory mission of the Maryland Episcopal Diocese. The Diocese consists of 108 parishes and over 45,000 parishioners, stretching from Western Maryland to Calvert County. The Maryland Episcopal Diocese supports HB066.

This bill as enacted would hold energy companies in Maryland accountable for their recent promises to permanently shutter coal-fired electric generation facilities in specific jurisdictions across the state.

Coal burning emits a large quantity of carbon per weight into the atmosphere, accelerating the greenhouse effect on global warming and the present climate crisis. Poor public health outcomes from heavy air pollution in communities located near coal-fired electric power facilities are well-documented. The Diocese has churches and parishioners in each of the affected counties across the state where these facilities are located. Seventy percent of Marylanders favor transitioning off dirty coal and providing economic support to coal workers and impacted communities.

Marylanders want a coal transition plan for Maryland that sets a firm deadline in law for the remaining coal plants to retire, and supports workers and communities impacted by coal plant closures, and their legacy of pollution.

We strongly back the bill's call for establishing the Fossil Fuel Community Transition Fund, informational progress meetings, and its mandated funding levels, including support for displaced workers who have derived the majority of their income from coal-fired electric generating units and who would be affected by its provisions or have been engaged in related work as also described in the bill.

We appreciate other uses of the Fund's identified budget, including 1) recruitment of veterans and formerly incarcerated individuals to pre-apprenticeship jobs training programs in viable sectors of the local and regional economies; 2) support of climate change programs towards resiliency; and 3) rebates to help pay for electric vehicle recharging equipment and infrastructure.

GreenGrace and the Maryland Episcopal Diocese respectfully request a favorable vote for HB066.