

January 28, 2021

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 414 – *Climate Solutions Now Act*

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

I support SB414, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021.

We just can't keep putting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere faster than natural processes can remove them. The California wildfires and extreme precipitation events here in Maryland in 2020 have shown that climate change is not some abstract threat to the distant future. It is here, now. We urgently need a just transition to clean energy and we need to invest in adaptations to make our communities more resilient. Because climate change won't wait for us to solve our problems of with pandemic, social inequity, economic dislocation, we must address all of these problems simultaneously to build better, more just and sustainable systems for the future.

The Climate Solutions Now act of 2021 will contribute to this effort by

- Ensuring Maryland is in line with the current climate science by committing us to a 60% reduction in carbon emissions below 2006 levels by 2030 and to reaching net zero emissions by 2045
- Restructuring our approach to climate justice by mandating that a percentage of all future climate spending must go to "disadvantaged" communities in terms of climate change, a term to be defined by experts and stakeholders
- Ensuring that labor voices are represented in our planning process, and that jobs benefit those who need them most
- Planting 5 million native trees by 2030 to sequester carbon and mitigate heat and flooding
- Electrifying state vehicles
- Increasing energy efficiency in buildings

International experts have urged action on climate with increasing fervor in recent years for good reason: the consequences of staying the course will be highly dangerous. Here in Maryland we have a lot at stake, with nuisance flooding, high heat days and storm surges already regular occurrences. We need to heed those warnings of scientists now and embrace the new green economy. There is no more time to delay on meaningful climate action.

I urge you to send a FAVORABLE report for this essential legislation.

Sincerely

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