



Testimony on – SB414 – *Climate Solutions Now Act*
Organization – WISE
Person Submitting: Monica O'Connor
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 31, 2021

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

WISE is testifying in support of the Climate Solutions Now Act SB414. WISE is a group of over 500 women in Anne Arundel County focused on important state and county level legislation. We have deep concerns that the climate crisis facing our state and county is not being addressed with necessary urgency. We are seeing our children's future jeopardized by the crisis unfolding before us. The science of climate change is clear – as is our lived experience. Rising waters in the county, sunny day flooding, high temperature in the summer and erratic weather is now commonplace.

We believe the science and anticipate that our elected officials will act with the necessary urgency this moment calls for. We cannot waste more time. Globally, we are at a critical choice point that will determine the course of our future forever. Climate change is already here, and we are the last generation that will be able to course correct towards a livable future for all.

We have no doubt that the state of Maryland has an important national role to play – and can be a leader on climate action. We have the tools, resources and knowledge to take action right now.

This bill ensures Maryland will be part of the new green future 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
- Taking several immediate steps to reduce emissions, such as planting 5 million native trees by 2030, electrifying state vehicles, requiring several net neutral buildings and mandating energy efficiency increases

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 have an opportunity to listen to scientists now while signaling to the nation that Maryland is ready to embrace the new green economy. There is no more time to delay on meaningful climate action.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this essential legislation. Please pass the Senate version of this bill. If a weaken bill is passed it will be insufficient to meet the urgency of the moment. Please pass this bill because we need bold action NOW.

Signed,
Monica O'Connor
WISE – Legislative Liaison
Mdoconnor17@gmail.com