



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the
Environment and Transportation Committee
and the
Economic Matters Committee
on
Senate Bill 414
March 31, 2021
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairmen and members of the Committees, thank you for this opportunity to support wise stewardship of resources with sustainable energy production and consumption. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a Maryland faith community of congregations from Ocean City to Red House, in three ELCA synods.

Sustainability is a measure we advocate for energy production and consumption, within our community and in public life. We have supported expanding renewable sources in the Maryland energy portfolio since 2002. Time has validated our position. Renewables are competitive on cost, less expensive if environmental detriment is calculated, and not subject to commodity price pressures. And they do not produce greenhouse gases.

GHGs are surpassing what the environment we experience can tolerate. Climate, food, safety, civic and economic life are at risk globally. We must rapidly devise and deploy public policies to diminish the catastrophic. The effort will require collaboration among a universe of interests. The cost of attending to climate disasters already exceeds the cost of a new energy regime. The calculation gets worse from now on.

Senate Bill 414 uses an array of best practices for reducing GHGs and sequestering carbon. It requires Maryland to accelerate its GHG emission reduction rate by doing more and better: expanding energy conservation programs, increasing tree planting, incentivizing land preservation (with a benefit for the Bay), investing in a clean vehicle State fleet. It also addresses workforce opportunities available with a transition to more carbon-neutral energy production and GHG reduction, which we regard as required. It is a comprehensive bill coordinating current and proposed Maryland authorities with responsibility for environmental affects in climate. That is necessary to be equal to the task.

With 7,700 miles of tidal shoreline, Maryland's people will be prime beneficiaries. Expanding a carbon-neutral Maryland, investing in energy efficiency, and practicing carbon sequestration will lower energy cost, scale new generation capacity, and create economic development opportunities for as many years as the bill contemplates meeting its goals. It will slow rapid earth warming now altering weather, oceans, and geography. Consumers, communities, and earth-climate all benefit. We therefore implore your favorable report.

Lee Hudson