



February 11, 2021

Montgomery County Young Democrats Testimony to House Environment and Transportation Committee in SUPPORT of HB 583 – *Climate Solutions Now Act*

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

My name is Becky Felker and I, in accordance with the Montgomery County Young Democrats, support HB 583, the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021.

Globally, we have a critical choice to make that will determine the course of our future forever. Climate change is already here, and you all are the last generation that will be able to correctly change course towards a livable future for my generation. As a sixteen year old young woman, my generation will be the one facing the consequences if this bill does get passed. Maryland has the tools, resources and knowledge to take action right now and to be a leader and role model for other states by showing climate change is something we take seriously.

Maryland will be severely impacted by climate change. According to the [University of Massachusetts Amherst case study](#), Maryland's mean average temperature has increased by 2.1 degrees Fahrenheit since 1895- which is faster than the global rise in mean temperature, and for the past eighteen years, Maryland's annual mean temperature has exceeded the 20th-century average (Climate System Research Center (CSRC) University of Massachusetts Amherst). But it is not only humanity that will see repercussions if there is no action taken. The U.S. Geological Survey finds that average annual stream temperatures have increased by 1.1°F in the past six decades in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This has led to the warmer waters not being able to hold as much oxygen- creating more fish killing zones and algal blooms. Even Maryland's own Blue Crab will have its habitat of eel grass put at risk.

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, which to be defined by experts and stakeholders

MCYD supports this bill because it has a multilateral approach to the many issues that climate change inflicts on Maryland. The Climate Solutions Now Act will take bold, necessary steps to help particular areas that suffer disproportionately from climate change like coastal regions or highly urbanized cities with lower quality air and steadily climbing temperatures. This bill will ensure that state vehicles are electrified, add five million native trees to Maryland to improve air quality, promote new “green” jobs, as well as keep existing jobs and improve the state’s current economic position.

International experts have urged action on climate change 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.

I encourage a FAVORABLE report for this essential legislation.

Signed,
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Montgomery County Young Democrats