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Baltimore County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee

Chair

Oversight Subcommittee on Personnel

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Joint Committee on the
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 3rd, 2021

HB 503 – Environment – Office on Climate Change - Establishment

Honorable Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee:

I am happy to introduce House Bill 503 Environment – Office on Climate Change - Establishment. This bill establishes The Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor. This office would be required to coordinate with the Commission on Climate Change to ensure certain recommendations are implemented as well as work with local governments on the development and implementation of local climate change plans.

According to NOAA, the global mean sea level is estimated to rise by at least one foot by the end of the century. As a coastal state, rising seas threaten resident's homes, vital infrastructure like roads, power plants, and water supplies, and the structures necessary for local jobs like oil and gas wells, sewage treatment plants, landfills, and many more. Further, climate change contributes to stronger and more deadly tropical storms that could pose a significant threat to the State of Maryland and the surrounding area, like 2012's hurricane Sandy that left hundreds of thousands of Marylanders without power and cost millions of dollars in damages. Creating an Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor would allow for a stronger and more centralized effort to address the important issue of climate change.

Overall, the establishment of this office would allow for greater coordination among Maryland governmental and non-governmental bodies regarding climate change and for the introduction of vital climate change initiatives. It would also allow for the initiation and oversight of research oriented around climate change and climate change plans as well as the resources required to implement those plans. Finally, it would benefit the greater Maryland area by assisting local governments who request services to improve climate efforts in their community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB 503.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Young".

Pat Young, 44B