



February 9, 2021

Written Testimony for [HB583](#)- Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 11, 2021

Submitted by Denisse Guitarra

Maryland Conservation Advocate, Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS)

Dear Environment and Transportation and Economic Matters Committees,

For 124 years, Audubon Naturalist Society has inspired people to enjoy, learn about and protect nature. We thank the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB583 - Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021.

As we navigate today's public health, social, and economic crises, it is critical to support the passage of HB583 as it is a sustainable well-rounded legislative solution. This legislation will ensure that Maryland meets its greenhouse gas reduction goals by cutting back emissions to 60% by 2030 and ensures that we are on a path to becoming carbon neutral by 2045. It includes policies to reduce carbon emissions from two of the largest sectors of carbon emissions: buildings and transportation. Furthermore, this legislation has the environment in mind as it proposes the best nature-based solution to combat climate change, planting 5 million native sustainable trees by 2030. Trees provide countless ecological services such as flood prevention, carbon sequestration, air and water purification, and reduction of urban heat island effects. These services cannot easily be replaced by built infrastructure, and it will always be much more expensive to try to do so.

If there is one golden remark about HB583, it would be its priority to place environmental justice at its core. This legislation ensures that vulnerable communities are both empowered and take action on climate change. It will give authority to the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable communities to decide what percent of all state funds invested in climate must be spent in overburdened communities. Additionally, there are provisions requiring that 500,000 of the 5 million trees will be prioritized and planted in underserved urban communities across the state.

ANS supports HB583 this legislation because we have no time to delay on meaningful climate action. People and the environment are already experiencing the effects of climate change from heat waves, flooding, and storm surges. ANS encourage a FAVORABLE report for this essential legislation. On behalf of ANS and our 28,000 members and supporters, we recommend that the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee supports the passage of HB583.

Sincerely,
Denisse Guitarra
MD Conservation Advocate
Audubon Naturalist Society

Woodend Sanctuary | 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815 | 301-652-9188

Rust Sanctuary | 802 Childrens Center Road, Leesburg, Virginia 20175 | 703-669-0000

anshome.org