



ANACOSTIA WATERSHED SOCIETY

February 9, 2021

RE: SUPPORT HB0583 Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021

Dear Chair and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am writing to urge you, on behalf of the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS), to pass the “Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021” (HB0583 / SB414), so that Maryland can take tangible steps towards reducing its carbon footprint for future generations and a more sustainable economy.

AWS is a 501(c)(3) organization, based in Bladensburg, Maryland in Prince George’s County, that was founded in 1989 by a small group of concerned individuals who decided that the environmental needs of the Anacostia River and its watershed communities required serious attention.

Since our founding, AWS has committed to planting and maintaining trees in environmentally degraded areas to increase the canopy cover of the Anacostia River watershed, located in both Maryland and the District of Columbia. Trees provide a plethora of ecosystem services that are beneficial to all Marylanders. Carbon sequestration is one very important service in our current era of climate change and increased natural disasters. Tree planting is an economical method for achieving not only carbon sequestration, but also managing stormwater runoff in the urban and suburban areas of the state.

By planting 5 million trees in Maryland, this bill will help not only the environment, but the economy by creating green jobs for low-skilled and skilled workers (i.e. nurseries and contractors). This is particularly critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has greatly threatened the nation’s economy.

Planting forests is a proven, affordable, and common-sense solution to ensure the safety of the water we drink, protect clean air, combat climate change, and provide open space that our community can turn to for physical recreation and mental well-being. Planting forests makes good financial sense and can provide a steady stream of economic and health benefits for Maryland families both now and in the future.

I urge your support of the “Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021.” Please pass this legislation to plant more trees, combat climate change, and protect our families’ health.

Thank you for your consideration and for serving our local community,

Erin Borgeson Castelli
Interim President/CEO

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Interim President/CEO

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