



TO: Members, House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Mary Beth Tung – Director, MEA
SUBJECT: HB0503 (SB0518) - Environment - Office on Climate Change - Establishment
DATE: February 3, 2021

MEA Position: Letter of Concern

House Bill 503 converts the Commission on Climate Change from a body with an advisory function to a policymaking body by creating an office within the Executive to implement the recommendations of that body.

Currently, the Maryland Energy Administration, Department of the Environment, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Planning, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Transportation, cooperate closely, utilizing their human resources and the expertise that they provide to develop collaborative approaches for the purpose of lowering greenhouse gas emissions, protecting waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, fostering resilience, and generally mitigating and combatting the effects of climate change. MEA and other State agencies participate, while soliciting and incorporating inputs from legislative, academic, industry and community representatives (among others), with great consideration given to the full spectrum of consequences for each program and policy.

This bill would supplant the efforts and informed opinions of the subject matter experts who serve the people of Maryland. MEA urges the Committee's thoughtful consideration of this information.