

February 18, 2022

The Baltimore Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church comprises over 600 congregations across the State of Maryland. This year congregations in our Conference voted to overwhelmingly support **HB596, the Environmental Human Rights Amendment entitled "Constitutional Amendment Environmental Rights.**

Our congregations in Maryland do not take this commitment lightly. The United Methodist Social Principles are clear:

All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. The continued course of action jeopardizes the natural heritage that God has entrusted to all generations. Therefore, let us recognize the responsibility of the church and its members to place a high priority on changes in economic, political, social, and technological lifestyles to support a more ecologically equitable and sustainable world leading to a higher quality of life for all of God's creation. — United Methodist Social Principles, ¶160

HB596 reflects our commonsense, moral commitment and heartfelt, personal conviction. We are to promote robust environmental equity and sustainable resource development for our most vulnerable in Maryland through fair public policies. We do this because we prioritize people who live in violent cycles of poverty, people of color who are targeted by toxic environmental policies that jeopardize their health and ability to flourish, families who aspire to live with greater security and prosperity.

United Methodists across Maryland are called to a ministry of reconciliation between God, humankind, and creation. In our civil engagement and alongside frontline communities who suffer from environmental injustices, we participate in God's healing of creation. Through acts of personal, social and civic righteousness, United Methodists model and advocate for a new public lifestyle for God's people and God's planet so that all God's children can share in the goodness of Creation.

We support HB596 and will keep our commitment to generations to come so that all of God's people may thrive.

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