



28 February 2022

Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for HB 1263
Environment – Office on Climate Change – Establishment

Dear Chairman Barve:

We support HB 1263 to establish the Office on Climate Change that will facilitate the implementation of the Commission on Climate Change's recommendations. The office will ensure that each state agency addresses the ways the agency can mitigate the causes of climate change and the impacts climate change will have on the agency's programs, policies, and finances. The office will also help coordinate any additional research to address factors that can fight climate change within the state. The work to be done around the subject of climate change is great and having an office dedicated to these efforts is vital to establish a more resilient and adaptable state.

The Commission on Climate Change has been given the exhaustive task to advise the Governor and General Assembly "on ways to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change." Per the latest 2021 Annual Report, the commission has established 54 recommendations across 10 different areas including buildings, transportation, carbon sequestration, and adaptation and resilience. Having an office dedicated to issues on climate change and implementing these recommendations helps provide the accountability and oversight necessary to put these recommendations into action.

We at AIA Maryland represent nearly 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and advocate for the profession and the quality of the built environment. As architects we work every day to design the future now, including addressing the changing climate and creating resilient communities. Among our responsibilities as architects, we design environments that adapt to evolving conditions, reduce harm and property damage, and more readily, efficiently, and effectively recover from adverse events. Just last year, AIA Maryland signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Maryland Department of Emergency Management to provide trained architect volunteers who can help by providing post-disaster building assessments and we are coordinating efforts to train more of our members. Having an Office on Climate Change to help support these efforts, taking the recommendations from the Commission on Climate Change and putting them into action, particularly as it pertains to buildings, is important to our work.

We support establishing a Maryland Office on Climate Change. Other neighboring states like New York have started similar offices, recognizing the need for people dedicated to fighting climate change at the state level. We believe that establishing an Office on Climate Change can make crucial strides to reduce greenhouse gases, prepare for and adapt to the effects of climate change in the state and bring the work of the Commission on Climate Change to action. We encourage you to support HB 1263 and see that the Office on Climate Change is established before the end of the year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Reilly", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Martina Reilly, AIA
Director

Cc: Delegate Pat Young