



Committee: Environment & Transportation
Testimony on: HB1263: Office of Climate Change - Establishment
Organization: WISE
Submitting: Monica O'Connor
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 9, 2022

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing our testimony today. WISE is an all-volunteer women-led group of advocates formed in Anne Arundel County, and has over 600 members. WISE urges you to vote favorably on HB1263.

HB1263 addresses a glaring gap in Maryland's Climate Crisis response: to date, there is no centralized office with the authority to coordinate Maryland's response across agencies. This bill establishes the Office on Climate Change in the Office of the Governor to monitor ongoing efforts across agencies to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change and keep the Governor and the General Assembly informed. The Office on Climate Change will also facilitate implementation of recommendations from the Maryland Commission on Climate Change and ensure that each state agency considers and addresses climate change in its operations. The Office on Climate Change will also have the authority to initiate climate change research and investigations to fight climate change beyond those included in the Commission on Climate Change's recommendations. Importantly, the Office on Climate Change will assist local governments in development of local plans to combat climate change. This is exactly the kind of coordination that will make individual programs in Maryland's disparate agencies and localities more effect.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.