

The Climate Solutions Act of 2020 (SB 926, HB 1425)

Bipartisan Legislation That Will Make Maryland A Climate Leader Once Again

Climate change is already making life harder in Maryland, with severe flooding, extreme heat, air pollution, and more. And the world's top scientists are warning that if we don't act to immediately reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it's about to get much worse.

However, our state's draft climate plan to reduce emissions – proposed by the Hogan Administration in 2019 and legally mandated under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act of 2016 – falls well short of climate scientists' recommendations and actions taken by other states.



In order to secure a safe climate for Marylanders of all generations, we have to drastically improve our climate action plan and put in place policies that will begin reducing emissions immediately. It starts by passing the [Climate Solutions Act](#).

There is now significant momentum behind this legislation. A week after Senate President Bill Ferguson spoke at a press conference announcing the Climate Solutions Act, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (EHEA) Committee **passed the bill with a bipartisan 8-2 vote**.

The Climate Solutions Act Aligns Our Law With Leading Climate Science. As amended by the Senate EHEA Committee, the bill will:

1. **Increase emissions reduction requirements** to achieve 60% greenhouse gas pollution reductions by 2030 based on 2006 levels (the law currently requires a 40% reduction). It also sets 2045 as the deadline by which the state economy will reach net zero emissions. These targets are in line with recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – made up of the leading climate scientists in the world – and backed by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science.
2. **Require the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) to amend their draft climate plan** to account for new emissions reduction targets. MDE will be required to use the “best available scientific information” in finalizing their plan, account for the social cost of carbon in analyzing its economic impact, be prohibited from claiming emissions reductions from the widening of highways or unproven fracked gas carbon capture and storage technology, and will have to use a 20-year timeframe for calculating methane emissions instead of a 100-year timeframe.

The Climate Solutions Act Creates a Climate Justice and Jobs Frame for Maryland

The legislation creates two workgroups to ensure an equitable transition to a clean economy:

1. **The Climate Justice Working Group**, made up largely of environmental justice representatives, will identify frontline and disadvantaged communities and study whether they receive an equitable portion of climate investment.
2. **The Climate Jobs Working Group**, bringing union leaders together with industry representatives and climate advocates, will to develop a pro-worker climate plan.

The Climate Solutions Act Isn't Just About Goals and Plans. It Takes Immediate Climate Actions:

1. Increases Energy Efficiency by 40%: The bill increases our electricity efficiency requirements from 2% annual rate savings to 2.8%, moving Maryland into the top tier of the country.
2. Electrifies State Vehicles: The bill ensures 50% of state buses and 100% of the state's light duty fleet to be Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEV) by 2030.
3. Requires Zero Emissions Public Buildings: The bill requires all new buildings with at least 25% of their funding coming from the state to meet net zero emissions building standards. Public schools, with the exception of one of the next five in each school system, are exempted.
4. Plants 4.5 Million Trees: To aid carbon sequestration, the bill directs the state, together with non-profit partners, to plant 500,00 additional trees every year for nine years.
5. Boosts Rooftop Solar: The bill requires all new buildings with at least 20,000 square feet of roof space to install rooftop solar.
6. Invests in Healthy Soils: The bill sends \$1 million each year to the Maryland's Healthy Soils Program to aid soil sequestration strategies.

The Climate Solutions Act Is Funded By Fossil Fuel Fees Expanded Under the Hogan Administration

Maryland is one of ten (soon to be eleven) states in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), an interstate cooperative that caps carbon emissions on fossil fuel polluters and charges a fee for the allowance of exceeding the limit. In 2017, member states agreed to reduce the cap 30% by 2030, effectively charging polluters more. Under regulations implemented by the Hogan Administration, Maryland is estimated to receive \$446 million in additional revenue by 2030.

The Climate Solutions Act funds its immediate climate actions with annual RGGI revenue *above* \$50 million. Right now, that's about how much money goes to existing programs, like energy bill assistance, energy efficiency, and clean and renewable energy programs. So the bill will not take existing funding away from those programs, but instead directs new money to climate pollution reduction strategies – exactly what the RGGI revenue is meant to fund.

This is the measured, bipartisan way for Maryland to retake its mantle as a national climate leader. Let's pass the Climate Solutions Act in 2020.

TAKE ACTION:

Urge your legislators to support the Climate Solutions Act (SB 926, HB 1425): <http://bit.ly/md-climate>

