



Marylanders Can't Wait Another Year For Stronger Action On Climate Change. Please Pass Clean Energy Jobs Act (HB 1158) This Year!

March 15, 2019

From: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, Environmental Integrity Project, Interfaith Power and Light (DC.MD.NoVA), and Maryland League of Conservation Voters

To:

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis, MD 21401

CC: Delegate Dereck Davis, Chair, Economic Matters Committee

Dear Mr. Speaker,

We are writing you as leaders of some of the oldest and largest environmental organizations active in Maryland. We are writing with a level of urgency we've never before conveyed – collectively – to an elected leader. Scientists say we have 11 short years to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half in Maryland and worldwide if we want to avoid truly catastrophic climate change. As a result, we appeal to you with great respect and rising resolve to pass the Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Act (HB 1158). This bill would move our state toward 50% renewable electricity by 2030 and put us on a path to 100% clean power in the years thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, we appeal to you not to read into this letter any sense of commonplace advocacy. Our tone is unprecedented here because the science of global warming has changed dramatically. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October – for the first time – gave the world a deadline. If we do not cut emissions roughly in half by the astonishingly short deadline of 2030, we will have runaway sea-level rise and massive climate disruption everywhere.

The first signs of this disruption are already apparent, from the recent “1000-year” floods in Elicott City to record warmth across our region. Just last month, researchers at Stanford University confirmed that sea-level rise linked to climate change cost City Dock shopkeepers – your constituents – between \$80k and \$170k in lost retail sales due to street flooding. If the

trend continues, shopkeepers in historic Annapolis will lose nearly 40,000 customers per year in the near future.

Meanwhile, due to Trump Administration tariffs and other factors, the solar industry in Maryland lost 800 jobs in 2018. Without passage of the Clean Energy Jobs Act, the industry could lose hundreds more workers this year. That's over a thousand Maryland families devastated by contracting solar sales at a time when we have never needed solar – and wind power – more.

The only immediate answer to all of these problems is the passage of the Clean Energy Jobs Act. The bill would expand rooftop and utility-scale solar deployment in our state. It would further incentivize offshore wind development in Maryland. And it would invest \$17 million in woman-owned, minority-owned, and veteran-owned clean energy businesses. Modeling commissioned by the Hogan Administration shows the bill would contribute to positive net economic and jobs growth in the state. Passage of the bill, according to the Hogan modeling, would also be indispensable to meeting the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

This is why, Speaker Busch, this bill simply must pass during the current legislative session. Waiting to pass the bill next year effectively forfeits nearly ten percent of our time to take action ahead of the science community's 2030 deadline. In a normal year, before the bombshell 2018 IPCC scientific report, our groups might have viewed a one-year delay as bitterly frustrating but as part of the difficult political process. But this year, as we've said, is different. We cannot accept delay. There is no reason to delay. Working families across Maryland cannot survive delay. The wetlands, oysters, and other ecosystems of the Bay will suffer from delay. For all of the reasons above, we do not need additional data from – for example – the Power Plant Research Project study or other outdated requests for more information.

So Mr. Speaker, please hear our call and the voices of our hundreds of thousands of members and supporters. Please do all you can to pass the Clean Energy Jobs Act. Fighting climate change will be your proudest legacy. Delay, even by a year, will cost us dearly.

Sincerely,

William C Baker, President, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Karla Raettig, Executive Director, Maryland League of Conservation Voters

Mike Tidwell, Executive Director, Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Joelle Novey, Executive Director, Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA)

Eric Schaeffer, Executive Director, Environmental Integrity Project