

An Open Letter From Business Owners in Ellicott City, Maryland

Governor Hogan: Thank you for all of your flood-relief efforts. But our Climate Is Changing. Please discontinue your support for fracked gas and new pipelines. Please support a goal to DOUBLE wind and solar power in our state.

FROM: Local Business Owners, Ellicott City, Maryland

June 12, 2018

TO: The Honorable Larry Hogan
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

As local business owners in downtown Ellicott City, Maryland, we want to thank you for your official leadership and personal support in the aftermath of the devastating May 27 storm. It means a lot to us that you have come in person to survey the damage and comfort us with your words and deeds. Thank you for the multi-pronged emergency relief efforts provided by the state. Your leadership will no doubt help us survive the near-term consequences of this record flood event.

But Governor, we would like to address the longer-term implications of the May 27 flood as well as the July 2016 flood. As you know Governor, both are considered 1000-year flood events, yet they have come just twenty two months apart. Many of our businesses have been destroyed not once, but twice, in two years. And according to the world's leading climate scientists, the facts are clear: Our global climate is rapidly changing. Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other sources show that extreme precipitation events are becoming much more common along the U.S. East Coast and around the world. This is a consequence of global warming, scientists say, driven by our use of fossil fuels including oil, coal, and natural gas.

As we local business owners in Ellicott City recover from the latest storm, we can't help but think of the long-term implications of climate and energy policies in our state of Maryland. As such, Governor Hogan, we ask you to do more than focus on short-term recovery for our city. We ask you to strongly consider altering several of your key energy policies in Maryland which we feel undermine the global cause of stabilizing our climate. Specifically, Governor, we ask you to discontinue your policy of "kick-starting" more pipelines and the combustion of fracked gas throughout Maryland. Your \$100 million plan to build gas pipelines across our state creates long-term climate harm to flood-prone businesses and residents like ourselves. Please acknowledge the growing science showing that gas from fracking and drilling is as bad -- if not worse -- for the climate than coal. As a state, we have banned fracking drilling because of its negative impacts and now, Governor, we need you to commit to an energy policy that dramatically reduces gas consumption, not increases it.

Likewise Governor, we ask that you embrace a concrete policy to expand the development and use of wind and solar power in Maryland. Unfortunately, in 2016, you vetoed legislation in Annapolis that would have significantly expanded the state's development of carbon-free power. The General Assembly had to override your veto. Now Governor, there is a bill being considered by the General Assembly, the Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Act, that would convert a full half of our electrical consumption to renewable power by the year 2030 while creating thousands of jobs in the wind and solar industry.

As business owners profoundly affected by recent flooding, we ask that you support this legislation for the benefit of our little town and all Marylanders. You recently pledged support for the Paris Climate Accord, and now we simply ask, in our moment of need, that you adjust your energy policies to match our long-term needs as residents of Ellicott City and as concerned citizens of a fragile planet.

Sincerely,

Mojan Bagha, Main Street Oriental Rugs
Jason Barnes, All Time Toys