



MaryPIRG Student Climate Action Coalition

WHO WE ARE

MSCAC is a coalition of undergraduate and graduate college students from across Maryland public schools who advocate for climate action. Right now, we're campaigning for carbon neutrality.

OUR MISSION

This school year, we have developing and are lobbying for a carbon neutrality commitment bill that includes all Maryland public colleges. Aside from passing carbon neutrality legislation, our current priorities are expanding sustainable education initiatives for students across our state, with an emphasis on understanding intersectionality and environmental justice within the climate action movement.

OUR PROGRESS

Right now, our bill is supported by students from 11 universities and is sponsored by Delegate Jared Solomon and Senator James Rosapepe.

The FUTURE Act

Our bill has four central goals

- 1. Carbon Neutrality:** all Maryland public universities must achieve complete carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate step requiring carbon neutrality for purchased electricity and direct emissions in 2025.
- 2. Offset Requirements:** if universities choose to use carbon offsets, selected percentages will be in the Chesapeake watershed, benefiting communities experiencing environmental injustices, or hand-picked by students.
- 3. Offset Verification:** if carbon offsets are used to achieve carbon neutrality, they must undergo a verification process to ensure they are effective.
- 4. Office of Sustainability:** by 2023, universities must establish a dedicated position to ensure climate and sustainability goals are being prioritized and met.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Combating climate change

From more extreme heat waves to shrinking sea ice and glaciers to an incredible loss of biodiversity, a warming planet's effects are far-reaching and catastrophic.

Climate change exacerbates existing inequities

Communities in Maryland that are already struggling are most likely to be impacted by climate change first. Look no further than Baltimore—extreme heat in 'urban heat islands' are concentrated in the lowest-income areas of the city.

Co-benefits of local carbon offsets

Keeping carbon offset projects like reforestation and renewable energy in Maryland and surrounding areas will bring better air and water quality, job opportunities, and environmental education for people in our state.

Our universities are leaders

Maryland's public universities both produce leaders for our state and are in the unique position to be leaders themselves. Achieving carbon neutrality means that our universities are not contributing to climate change—instead, they become models for sustainable living.

FISCAL NOTE

Using numbers from Maryland's state energy tracking database, we have estimated that the cost of carbon neutrality will be around a 2% increase in our current energy spending. This will be less than \$4 per metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent. Compare this to the social cost of carbon dioxide, which is estimated at \$50 per metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent.