Maryland League of Conservation Voters
The Political Voice of the Environment

Hot List - WEEK of March 8, 2016

UPCOMING BILLS FOR FLOOR ACTION IN THE SENATE

SB 198 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Neonicotinoid Pesticides - Restrictions on Sales and Use (Pollinator Protection Act of 2016) ***Support as Amended*** As amended, this bill removes neonicotinoid pesticides for residential use. Neonicotinoid pesticides have been linked to devastating loss rates of bees and other pollinators.	**Nathan-Pulliam; Benson; Ferguson; Guzzone; et al.** Senate Floor Action: Second Reading Passed with Amendments

UPCOMING BILLS IN BUDGET AND TAXATION

SB 190 Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2017) ***Monitor*** We will oppose rollbacks to the legislative legacy of healthy air, clean water, and unpolluted lands. On first blush, the Governor seems to have refrained from further borrowing from Program Open Space or the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bay Trust Fund or Bay Restoration Fund, however we must remain vigilant in protecting these programs as well as critical resources needed for the Departments of Environmental, Agriculture, Transportation, Planning, Natural Resources, and Energy to enforce laws.	**Administration**

SB 834 Income Tax Credit - Energy Storage Systems ***Support*** This bill would provide residential and commercial tax credits for the purchase and use of energy storage systems, in a hope to increase the use of renewables and to make Maryland's energy consumption a more environmentally friendly. The use of storage systems would help prevent the waste of unused energy, ultimately decreasing our need to burn coal, and maximizing our use of renewables like solar.	**Guzzone** Budget and Taxation Committee Hearing: March 9 @ 1:00 PM
SB 908 Maryland Open Transportation Investment Decision Act of 2016 ***Support*** Maryland needs an open and objective system for making its transportation funding decisions. This bill creates a scoring system for major transportation projects.	**DeGrange; Astle; Conway; Ferguson; et al.** Budget and Taxation Committee Hearing: March 14 @ 1:00 PM
SB 927 - **MARYLAND LCV PRIORITY** Program Open Space Trust Fund Act of 2016 ***Support*** The legislation proposed for 2016 will create the Preservation Trust Fund - a lock-box like protection for Program Open Space. The legislation requires re-payment of previous diversions and canceling pre-authorized diversions of transfer tax revenues established in BRFAs for FY2017 and FY2018, and establishes clear, consistent, and very limited circumstances when funds can be diverted from the Preservation Trust Fund.	**Middleton; Astle; Benson; Currie; et al.** Budget and Taxation Committee Hearing: March 9 @ 1:00 PM
SB 1035 Transportation - Transit Service - State Grants and Farebox Recovery Rate ***Support*** This bill removes the requirement to show that 35% of the costs of operating a transit system is covered by the fares paid by passengers.	**Madaleno; Conway; Currie; Feldman; et al.** Budget and Taxation Committee Hearing: March 17 @ 3:00 PM

UPCOMING BILLS IN EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

SB 57 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Community Cleanup and Greening Act of 2016 ***Support*** Bans the free distribution of plastic bags at point-of-sale. A 10-cent fee on paper and reusable bags defrays the additional cost for retailers and supports programs to distribute reusable bags in low-income communities, as well as waterway clean-up efforts.	**Ramirez** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
SB 166 Land Use Actions - Legislative Bodies - Judicial Review ***Support*** Codifies statutory right of review for neighboring property owners harmed by legislative land use action. Current statute grants right of review for neighboring property owners harmed by single zoning land use action.	**Conway** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
SB 367 Maryland Redeemable Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act ***Support*** The Maryland Bottle Bill will place a 5-cent deposit on beverage containers, which is refunded when the container is recycled. The program will triple beverage container recycling to over 70% and reduce litter, landfilling, and incineration of recyclable materials.	**Ferguson; Benson; Guzzone; Lee; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
SB 398 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Reducing Environmental Degradation for the Underserved Through Community Engagement (The REDUCE Act) ***Support*** This bill addresses the need for minority and low-income communities to receive information about truck traffic associated with new proposed permits for four selected categories of industrial development. Such information would facilitate the development of approaches that minimize human exposure to diesel exhaust, a known human carcinogen which contributes to air pollution and increases the risks of asthma and other health disparities in already overburdened neighborhoods.	**Ramirez; Benson; Guzzone; Nathan-Pulliam; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

SB 496 - **MARYLAND LCV PRIORITY** Poultry Litter Management Act ***Support*** The bill would require poultry companies to take responsibility for manure produced by their chickens. Farmers would still be able to keep and use any manure for which they have a state approved plan. This would result in Maryland taxpayers and farmers no longer bearing the sole burden of reducing this pollution.	**Madaleno; Benson; Conway; Feldman; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
SB 607 Agriculture - Cattle, Swine, and Poultry - Use of Antimicrobial Drugs ***Support*** This bill stops the irresponsible use of human antibiotics in raising livestock, but allows them to be used to treat sick animals and control outbreaks. Antibiotic resistant bacteria are a serious health crisis that requires reducing all uses of antibiotics. 70 percent of human antibiotics are sold for use in animals and this bill seeks to cut that number.	**Pinsky; Conway; Ferguson; Madaleno; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
SB 748 Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act - Application ***Oppose*** This bill would completely undermine the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act as it would reopen a “grandfathering” clause that expires this October, and extend that deadline to 2020, thereby allowing the very developments that the Act meant to avoid.	**Ready** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

UPCOMING BILLS IN FINANCE

SB 57 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Community Cleanup and Greening Act of 2016 ***Support*** Bans the free distribution of plastic bags at point-of-sale. A 10-cent fee on paper and reusable bags defrays the additional cost for retailers and supports programs to distribute reusable bags in low-income communities, as well as waterway clean-up efforts.	**Ramirez** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
SB 367 Maryland Redeemable Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act ***Support*** The Maryland Bottle Bill will place a 5-cent deposit on beverage containers, which is refunded when the container is recycled. The program will triple beverage container recycling to over 70% and reduce litter, landfilling, and incineration of recyclable materials.	**Ferguson; Benson; Guzzone; Lee; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

SB 726 Maryland Clean Energy Center - Clean Energy Technology Funding ***Support*** This bill creates a $30 million public investment fund target to attract a more significant commitment of private sector capital into the market sector. The fund and related financing programs would be managed by the Maryland Clean Energy Center. Revenue from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction carbon allowance auction proceeds, currently in reserve but unappropriated, are directed to seed this dedicated investment fund.	**Mathias; Benson; Feldman; Guzzone; et al.** Finance Committee Hearing: March 8 @ 1:00 PM
SB 921 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Clean Energy Jobs - Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Revisions ***Support*** A critical component to the reduction of greenhouse gases is increasing the State's sourcing of energy from renewable sources. Current state goals aim to source 20% renewable sources by the year 2022. The Clean Energy Jobs Act seeks to increase the goal to 25% renewables by the year 2020. The bill also includes a significant investment in workforce development for Minority and Women-Owned Businesses in the renewable energy fields.	**Pugh; Benson; Feldman; Madaleno; et al.** Finance Committee Hearing: March 8 @ 1:00 PM

UPCOMING BILLS IN APPROPRIATIONS

HB 150 Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2017) ***Monitor*** We will oppose rollbacks to the legislative legacy of healthy air, clean water, and unpolluted lands. On first blush, the Governor seems to have refrained from further borrowing from Program Open Space or the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bay Trust Fund or Bay Restoration Fund, however we must remain vigilant in protecting these programs as well as critical resources needed for the Departments of Environmental, Agriculture, Transportation, Planning, Natural Resources, and Energy to enforce laws.	**Administration**
HB 891 Maryland Transit Administration - Farebox Recovery Rate - Repeal ***Support*** Removes the requirement to show that 35% of the costs of operating a transit system is covered by the fares paid by passengers.	**Lierman; A. Miller; Anderson; B. Robinson; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

HB 1013 Maryland Open Transportation Investment Decision Act of 2016 ***Support*** Maryland needs an open and objective system for making its transportation funding decisions. This bill creates a scoring system for major transportation projects.	**Beidle; B. Barnes; Branch; Brooks; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 1464 - **MARYLAND LCV PRIORITY** Program Open Space Trust Fund Act of 2016 ***Support*** The legislation proposed for 2016 will create the Preservation Trust Fund - a lock-box like protection for Program Open Space. The legislation requires re-payment of previous diversions and canceling pre-authorized diversions of transfer tax revenues established in BRFAs for FY2017 and FY2018, and establishes clear, consistent, and very limited circumstances when funds can be diverted from the Preservation Trust Fund.	**Gaines; A. Miller; B. Barnes; B. Robinson; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

UPCOMING BILLS IN ECONOMIC MATTERS

HB 31 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Community Cleanup and Greening Act of 2016 ***Support*** Bans the free distribution of plastic bags at point-of-sale. A 10-cent fee on paper and reusable bags defrays the additional cost for retailers and supports programs to distribute reusable bags in low-income communities, as well as waterway clean-up efforts.	**Lierman** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 610 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act - Reauthorization ***Support*** The 2009 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act is set to expire at the end of 2016 unless it is renewed this legislative session. In addition to renewal, we are asking to expand the goals from 25% reduction from peak 2006 levels by the year 2020 to 40% by the year 2030. This bill was co-sponsored by Senate President Miller, is supported by Speaker Busch, and has garnered wide bi-partisan support.	**Barve; Beidle; Carr; Chang; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

SB 323 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY - FROM SENATE CHAMBER** Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act - Reauthorization ***Support*** The 2009 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act is set to expire at the end of 2016 unless it is renewed this legislative session. In addition to renewal, we are asking to expand the goals from 25% reduction from peak 2006 levels by the year 2020 to 40% by the year 2030. This bill was co-sponsored by Senate President Miller, is supported by Speaker Busch, and has garnered wide bi-partisan support.	**Pinsky; Benson; Brochin; Conway; et al.** Final Senate Status: Third Reading Passed (38-8)
HB 705 Maryland Clean Energy Center - Clean Energy Technology Funding ***Support*** This bill creates a $30 million public investment fund target to attract a more significant commitment of private sector capital into the market sector. The fund and related financing programs would be managed by the Maryland Clean Energy Center. Revenue from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction carbon allowance auction proceeds, currently in reserve but unappropriated, are directed to seed this dedicated investment fund.	**Davis; Barve; Clippinger; Gaines; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 821 Energy Storage Portfolio Standard (Storage Technology and Electric Power (STEP) Act) ***Support*** Adopts an approach similar to a federal proposal to set an "energy storage standard" similar to the state's renewable portfolio standard (RPS). The bill provides that by 2021 1% of the annual average peak power demand be available as storage capacity, rising to 2% by 2025. The bill is modeled off of the state RPS and includes tradeable certificates for compliance.	**Korman; A. Miller; Barkley; Carr; et al.** Committee Hearing: Unfavorable Report
HB 862 Maryland Redeemable Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act ***Support*** The Maryland Bottle Bill will place a 5-cent deposit on beverage containers, which is refunded when the container is recycled. The program will triple beverage container recycling to over 70% and reduce litter, landfilling, and incineration of recyclable materials.	**Frush; A. Washington; B. Barnes; Brooks; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

HB 1106 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Clean Energy Jobs - Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Revisions ***Support*** A critical component to the reduction of greenhouse gases is increasing the State's sourcing of energy from renewable sources. Current state goals aim to source 20% renewable sources by the year 2022. The Clean Energy Jobs Act seeks to increase the goal to 25% renewables by the year 2020. The bill also includes a significant investment in workforce development for Minority and Women-Owned Businesses in the renewable energy fields.	**Frick; A. Miller; A. Washington; B. Barnes; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

UPCOMING BILLS IN ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

SB 323 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY - FROM SENATE CHAMBER** Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act - Reauthorization ***Support*** The 2009 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act is set to expire at the end of 2016 unless it is renewed this legislative session. In addition to renewal, we are asking to expand the goals from 25% reduction from peak 2006 levels by the year 2020 to 40% by the year 2030. This bill was co-sponsored by Senate President Miller, is supported by Speaker Busch, and has garnered wide bi-partisan support.	**Pinsky; Benson; Brochin; Conway; et al.** Final Senate Status: Third Reading Passed (38-8)
HB 610 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act - Reauthorization ***Support*** The 2009 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act is set to expire at the end of 2016 unless it is renewed this legislative session. In addition to renewal, we are asking to expand the goals from 25% reduction from peak 2006 levels by the year 2020 to 40% by the year 2030. This bill was co-sponsored by Senate President Miller, is supported by Speaker Busch, and has garnered wide bi-partisan support.	**Barve; Beidle; Carr; Chang; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

HB 31 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Community Cleanup and Greening Act of 2016 ***Support*** Bans the free distribution of plastic bags at point-of-sale. A 10-cent fee on paper and reusable bags defrays the additional cost for retailers and supports programs to distribute reusable bags in low-income communities, as well as waterway clean-up efforts.	**Lierman** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 178 Natural Resources - Roadside Trees - Preservation and Protection ***Support*** This bill would protect healthy roadside trees by making the current permit requirement for tree removal more robust by adding criteria to permit issuance and enforcement; also adds certain mitigation requirements for roadside tree removal.	**Lafferty; Frush; Lam; Lierman; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 211 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Neonicotinoid Pesticides - Labeling, Signage, and Restrictions on Sales and Use (Pollinator Protection Act of 2016) ***Support*** Removes neonicotinoid pesticides for residential use, and requires retail level labeling or signage for neonicotinoid plants and seeds. Neonicotinoid pesticides have been linked to devastating loss rates of bees and other pollinators.	**Healey; B. Robinson; Beidle; Beitzel; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 243 Land Use Actions - Legislative Bodies - Judicial Review ***Support*** Codifies statutory right of review for neighboring property owners harmed by legislative land use action. Current statute grants right of review for neighboring property owners harmed by single zoning land use action.	**Lafferty; B. Barnes; Beidle; Carr; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 325 Environment - Bay Restoration Fund - Use of Funds - Nutrient Credit Purchases ***Oppose*** This bill would allow the Bay Restoration Fund to be used to purchase nutrient credits under a nutrient credit trading program. This bill is premature as there is currently no nutrient credit trading program in place and no way to verify whether this use of the fund is appropriate, environmentally effective, or cost-effective.	**Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee; Environment** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

HB 599 - **MARYLAND LCV PRIORITY** Poultry Litter Management Act ***Support*** The bill would require poultry companies to take responsibility for manure produced by their chickens. Farmers would still be able to keep and use any manure for which they have a state approved plan. This would result in Maryland taxpayers and farmers no longer bearing the sole burden of reducing this pollution.	**Lam; A. Washington; B. Barnes; B. Robinson; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 820 - **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PRIORITY** Reducing Environmental Degradation for the Underserved Through Community Engagement (The REDUCE Act) ***Support*** This bill addresses the need for minority and low-income communities to receive information about truck traffic associated with new proposed permits for four selected categories of industrial development. Such information would facilitate the development of approaches that minimize human exposure to diesel exhaust, a known human carcinogen which contributes to air pollution and increases the risks of asthma and other health disparities in already overburdened neighborhoods.	**Lam; Beidle; Carr; Ebersole; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 829 Agriculture - Cattle, Swine, and Poultry - Use of Antimicrobial Drugs ***Support*** This bill stops the irresponsible use of human antibiotics in raising livestock, but allows them to be used to treat sick animals and control outbreaks. Antibiotic resistant bacteria are a serious health crisis that requires reducing all uses of antibiotics. 70 percent of human antibiotics are sold for use in animals and this bill seeks to cut that number.	**Robinson, S.; Beidle; Carr; Ebersole; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 862 Maryland Redeemable Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Act ***Support*** The Maryland Bottle Bill will place a 5-cent deposit on beverage containers, which is refunded when the container is recycled. The program will triple beverage container recycling to over 70% and reduce litter, landfilling, and incineration of recyclable materials.	**Frush; A. Washington; B. Barnes; Brooks; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard

HB 1010 Maryland Transit Administration Oversight and Planning Board ***Support*** Creates an oversight and planning board for the Maryland Transit Administration.	**Lierman; A. Miller; B. Barnes; B. Robinson; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 1013 Maryland Open Transportation Investment Decision Act of 2016 ***Support*** Maryland needs an open and objective system for making its transportation funding decisions. This bill creates a scoring system for major transportation projects.	**Beidle; B. Barnes; Branch; Brooks; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 1026 Maryland Transit Administration - Fares - Calculation and Public Comment ***Support*** Clarifies how and when transit fares are increase.	**Lam; A. Miller; Beidle; Fraser-Hidalgo; et al.** Environment and Transportation Committee Hearing: March 10 @ 1:00 PM
HB 1112 Environment - Gas Storage Wells and Facilities - Safety Regulations ***Support*** Creates self-inspection requirements for natural gas storage wells in Maryland. The owner or operator of a gas storage well will have to inspect the wellheads, examine the mechanical integrity of the well, and monitor the gas pressure of the well. Requires a comprehensive risk management plan for each well.	**Platt** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 1197 Prince George's County - Forest Conservation Act - Net Tract Area PG/MC 114-16 ***Oppose*** This bill, as amended, would exempt certain properties in the County from the Forest Conservation Act and alter definitions in the Act as applied in the County to reduce mitigation requirements.	**Montgomery County Delegation; Prince George's County Delegation**

HB 1328 Environment - Lead and Mercury Wheel Weights - Prohibited ***Support*** Would ban the sale and use of mercury and lead wheel weights in the State of Maryland. This ban applies to installation, sales and repairs of mercury and lead wheel weights in the State of Maryland, and new and used vehicle sales in the State of Maryland. Lead and mercury weights are used in the auto industry market to balance tires of vehicles. At the end of a vehicle's life, they can fall off tires and then break down and contaminate soil, wash into sewers and local waterways, or end up being transported to municipal landfills and incinerators.	**Lam; S. Robinson; Tarlau** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 1412 Real Property - New Residential Property - Information on Renewable Energy Alternatives ***Support*** This bill requires that, in a contract for the initial sale of a new home, the builder provide the purchaser with specified information about energy-saving alternatives for the home, including green roofing, solar photovoltaic panels or solar/thermal devices, rain gardens and bayscaping, home weatherization, and energy storage systems.	**Fraser-Hidalgo; Barve; Beidle; Carr; et al.** Environment and Transportation Committee Hearing: March 8 @ 1:00 PM
HB 1428 Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act - Application ***Oppose*** This bill would completely undermine the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act as it would reopen a “grandfathering” clause that expires this October, and extend that deadline to 2020, thereby allowing the very developments that the Act meant to avoid.	**Rose; Adams; B. Wilson; Beitzel; et al.** Environment and Transportation Committee Hearing: March 9 @ 1:00 PM

UPCOMING BILLS IN WAYS AND MEANS

HB 386 Income Tax Credit - Energy Storage Systems ***Support*** This bill would provide residential and commercial tax credits for the purchase and use of energy storage systems, in a hope to increase the use of renewables and to make Maryland's energy consumption more environmentally friendly. The use of storage systems would help prevent the waste of unused energy, ultimately decreasing our need to burn coal, and maximizing our use of renewables like solar.	**Reznik; Barve; Fraser-Hidalgo; Kramer; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard
HB 1012 Income Tax Credit - Commuter Benefits - Eligibility and Credit Amount ***Support*** Increase the maximum credit allowed under the Maryland Commuter Tax benefit from $50 to $100.	**McCray; A. Washington; B. Robinson; Barron; et al.** Committee Hearing: Already Heard