





Week of February 15, 2021

The Maryland League of Conservation Voters is pleased to present the "Hot List" – a detailed list of environmental legislation moving through the Maryland General Assembly. Usually, our volunteers would deliver the Hot List to your office every Tuesday however, this year, it will be emailed to your office. We hope you find this weekly communication helpful and instructive as you tackle important environmental bills this session. If you have any questions, please contact Kristen Harbeson at kharbeson@mdlcv.org or 410-952-8100

MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Appropriations

BILL #	HB114/SB199	 Maryland LCV Priority
TITLE	Transit Safety and Investment Act of 2021	
SUMMARY	Mandates at least roughly \$90 million additional to anticipated spending from the Transportation Trust Fund for six years to address transit “state of good repair” needs identified by the MTA.	
EQUITY	Because a safer and more reliable transit system will support middle-class jobs – many held by women and people of color – this bill goes directly to assisting low-wealth communities.	
STATUS	Already Heard	
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority	
SPONSOR	Lierman/McCray	
COMMITTEE	Appropriations	

BILL #	HB334/SB137	 Maryland LCV Priority
TITLE	Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act of 2021	
SUMMARY	Requires all buses purchased by the Maryland Department of Transportation beginning in 2023 to be electric, leading to a complete fleet transition.	
EQUITY	Diesel emissions contribute significantly to climate pollution, as well as to the respiratory health of passengers and drivers. This directly impacts those from underserved and low-income communities who are more likely to be using public transit.	
STATUS	Already Heard	
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority	
SPONSOR	Korman/Zucker	
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Appropriations)	



Economic Matters

BILL #	<i>HB66/SB148</i>
TITLE	Coal Community Transition Act of 2021
SUMMARY	The bill codifies dates by which Maryland's coal-fired power plants will retire, consistent with dates announced by the owners of five of the six remaining plants. The bill establishes and provides an initial allocation of funds to a new financial account to support impacted workers and support communities which have borne the brunt of coal pollution. There will also be a longer-term fossil fuel transition planning process informed by public meetings and a broad array of stakeholders.
EQUITY	The bill addresses environmental injustices by 1) reducing emissions that significantly pollute our climate, air, and waters which disproportionately damage the health of low-income communities and communities of color; and 2) creating a mechanism by which impacted workers and communities can transition to a prosperous and healthful clean energy economy.
STATUS	Bill Hearing – February 18 at 1:30pm
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Brooks/West
COMMITTEE	Economic Matters

BILL #	<i>HB298/SB83</i>
TITLE	Utility Regulation – Consideration of Climate and Labor
SUMMARY	Requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to consider the effect on climate change, and the state's efforts to achieve its legislatively enacted climate goals, of the PSC's regulatory actions linking, but not limited to, decisions on whether to approve new electricity generation plants. The bill also requires the PSC to consider fair labor standards in its regulatory proceedings.
EQUITY	The bill addresses environmental injustices by ensuring that climate pollution – which disproportionately harms low-income communities and communities of color – is considered when decisions having a significant impact on climate pollution are made by the PSC. Considerations of fair labor standards is an important part of environmental progress.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Charkoudian/Kramer
COMMITTEE	Economic Matters



BILL #	HB314/SB223
TITLE	Plastic Bag Reduction Act
SUMMARY	Bans plastic bags at check-out, allows jurisdictions with existing fees to continue collecting fees on paper bags. Under current law, jurisdictions must seek enabling legislation for specific taxing authority – including fees on paper at check-out. This bill would change the law to require jurisdictions to seek enabling legislation to set a price floor for retailers.
EQUITY CONCERNS	Litter has a disproportionate impact on communities that lack adequate public services and have more blight.
STATUS	Already heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Lierman/Augustine
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters)

**Environmental
Community
Priority**

BILL #	HB583/SB0414
TITLE	Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021
SUMMARY	The bill changes Maryland’s greenhouse gas reduction requirements to 60% below 2006 levels by 2030 and net-zero by 2045. The bill also calls on the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to determine the percentage of state funds spent on climate change that must go to environmental justice communities. It also creates a work group to protect impacted workers. Finally, the bill provides several low-cost mitigation policies, including tree plantings in underserved urban areas and a shift to zero-emission buses.
EQUITY	This bill addresses environmental injustices by: 1) reducing the emission causing climate impacts disproportionately in low-wealth communities and communities of color 2) ensuring a portion of state climate funds are spent on environmental justice communities, 3) helping create jobs at all levels, and 4) investing in tree-planting, focusing on underserved, urban communities.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Stein/Pinsky
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters)



**Maryland LCV
Priority**

Environment and Transportation

BILL #	HB82/ SB151
TITLE	Constitutional Amendment – Environmental Rights
SUMMARY	Amends the Declaration of Rights section of the State Constitution to include 1) every person has the fundamental right to a healthful environment, including clean air, water, land, and a stable climate, and 2) designates the state as trustee of Maryland’s natural resources or current and future generations
EQUITY	Passing the amendment addresses equity in protecting the fundamental right to a healthful environment of all people residing in Maryland, regardless of what zip code they live in.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	W. Fisher/ Patterson
COMMITTEE	Judicial Proceedings (Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs)



BILL #	<i>HB295/ SB227</i>
TITLE	Water Pollution – Stormwater Management Regulations and Watershed Implementation Plans – Review and Update
SUMMARY	Requires the Maryland Department of Environment to update the State’s stormwater permits with recent rainfall data – reflecting climate change.
EQUITY	Underserved urban areas are some of the hardest hit by the State’s failure to address stormwater runoff. Runoff during severe storms can cause flooding and daily runoff pollutes local waterways
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Love/Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

BILL #	<i>HB314/SB223</i>
TITLE	Plastic Bag Reduction Act
SUMMARY	Bans plastic bags at check-out, allows jurisdictions with existing fees to continue collecting fees on paper bags. Under current law, jurisdictions must seek enabling legislation for specific taxing authority – including fees on paper at check-out. This bill would change the law to require jurisdictions to seek enabling legislation to set a price floor for retailers.
EQUITY CONCERNS	Litter has a disproportionate impact on communities that lack adequate public services and have more blight.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Lierman/Augustine
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters)

**Environmental
Community
Priority**

BILL #	<i>HB334/SB137</i>
TITLE	Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act of 2021
SUMMARY	Requires all buses purchased by the Maryland Department of Transportation beginning in 2023 to be electric, leading to a complete fleet transition.
EQUITY	Diesel emissions contribute significantly to climate pollution, as well as to the respiratory health of passengers and drivers. This most directly impacts underserved and low-income communities who are more likely to be using public transit.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Korman/Zucker
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Appropriations)



**Maryland LCV
Priority**



BILL #	<i>HB512/SB528</i>
TITLE	Coast Smart Siting and Design – Private Construction
SUMMARY	The bill will apply Coast Smart siting and design criteria to certain private construction projects in an effort to increase Maryland resiliency in the face of sea level rise, nuisance flooding, and increased storm events associated climate change.
EQUITY	We know that the impacts of climate change - like sea level rise - disproportionately impact underserved communities. This bill will make sure that, moving forward, any infrastructure built in areas subject to future sea level rise or high-tide flooding will be built to withstand those conditions.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Lehman/Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

BILL #	<i>HB583/SB0414</i>
TITLE	Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021
SUMMARY	The bill changes Maryland’s greenhouse gas reduction requirements to 60% below 2006 levels by 2030 and net-zero by 2045. The bill also calls on the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to determine the percentage of state funds spent on climate change that must go to environmental justice communities. It also creates a work group to protect impacted workers. Finally, the bill provides several low-cost mitigation policies, including tree plantings in underserved urban areas and a shift to zero-emission buses.
EQUITY	This bill addresses environmental injustices by: 1) reducing the emission causing climate impacts disproportionately in low-wealth communities and communities of color 2) ensuring a portion of state climate funds are spent on environmental justice communities, 3) helping create jobs at all levels, and 4) investing in tree-planting, focusing on underserved, urban communities.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Stein/Pinsky
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters)



**Maryland LCV
Priority**



BILL #	HB1207/ SB674
TITLE	Environment – Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities - Reform
SUMMARY	Reforms and strengthens the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to better identify the needs of environmental justice communities in order to guide state agency decisions on permitting and regulations.
EQUITY	The equity implications of this bill are sui generis, with the bill being a first, important step towards addressing long-ignored structural inequities in state policies and permitting
STATUS	Hearing – February 26 at 1:30pm
POSITION	Support with Strengthening Amendments
SPONSOR	Bridges/ Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs



Maryland LCV
Priority

BILL #	SB227/HB295
TITLE	Water Pollution – Stormwater Management Regulations and Watershed Implementation Plans – Review and Update
SUMMARY	Requires the Maryland Department of Environment to update the State’s stormwater permits with recent rainfall data – reflecting climate change
EQUITY	Underserved urban areas are some of the hardest hit by the State’s failure to address stormwater runoff. Runoff during severe storms can cause flooding and daily runoff pollutes local waterways
STATUS	First Reading – Environment and Transportation- Passed out of the Senate
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Elfreth/Love
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health and Government Operations

BILL #	HB22/SB195
TITLE	Stop PFAS Pollution Act
SUMMARY	Per-and-polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, are a family of approximately 5,000 man-made organic used in myriad consumer products. Because of their unique carbon-fluorine bonds, PFAS are resistant to degradation in the environment, can persist for decades in water and air, and accumulate in our bodies over time. This bill comprehensively addresses PFAS contamination by adopting some of the country’s strongest PFAS policies.
EQUITY CONCERNS	We don’t yet know the scope of our PFAS pollution problem in Maryland, although the substance is present throughout the state in waterways and even in fish that people eat. Generally speaking, communities of color are disproportionately impacted by toxic chemical exposure in consumer products, homes, and water.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Love/Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Health and Government Operations

Environmental
Community
Priority



MARYLAND SENATE

Budget and Tax

BILL #	SB199/ HB114
TITLE	Transit Safety and Investment Act of 2021
SUMMARY	Mandates at least roughly \$90 million additional to anticipated spending from the Transportation Trust Fund for six years to address transit “state of good repair” needs identified by the MTA.
EQUITY	Because a safer and more reliable transit system will support middle-class jobs – many held by women and people of color – this bill goes directly to assisting low-wealth communities.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	McCray/Lierman
COMMITTEE	Budget and Tax



Maryland LCV
Priority

BILL #	SB137/HB334
TITLE	Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act of 2021
SUMMARY	Requires all buses purchased by the Maryland Department of Transportation beginning in 2023 to be electric (or other zero-emission technology), leading to a complete fleet transition.
EQUITY	Diesel emissions contribute significantly to climate pollution, as well as to the respiratory health of passengers and drivers. This most directly impacts those from underserved and low-income communities who are more likely to be using public transit.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Zucker/Korman
COMMITTEE	Education, Health and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax)



Maryland LCV
Priority



BILL #	SB0414/ HB583
TITLE	Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021
SUMMARY	The bill changes Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction requirements to 60% below 2006 levels by 2030 and net-zero by 2045. The bill also calls on the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to determine the percentage of state funds spent on climate change that must go to environmental justice communities. It also creates a work group to protect impacted workers. Finally, the bill provides several low-cost mitigation policies, including tree plantings in underserved urban areas and a shift to zero-emission buses.
EQUITY	This bill addresses environmental injustices by: 1) reducing the emission causing climate impacts disproportionately in low-wealth communities and communities of color 2) ensuring a portion of state climate funds are spent on environmental justice communities, 3) helping create jobs at all levels, and 4) investing in tree-planting, focusing on underserved, urban communities.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Pinsky/Stein
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax)



**Maryland LCV
Priority**

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

BILL #	SB151/HB82
TITLE	Constitutional Amendment – Environmental Rights
SUMMARY	Amends the Declaration of Rights section of the State Constitution to include 1) every person has the fundamental right to a healthful environment, including clean air, water, land, and a stable climate, and 2) designates the state as trustee of Maryland's natural resources or current and future generations
EQUITY	Passing the amendment addresses equity in protecting the fundamental right to a healthful environment of all people residing in Maryland, regardless of what zip code they live in.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Patterson/W. Fisher
COMMITTEE	Judicial Proceedings (Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs)



BILL #	SB195/ HB22
TITLE	Stop PFAS Pollution Act
SUMMARY	Per-and-polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, are a family of approximately 5,000 man-made organic used in myriad consumer products. Because of their unique carbon-fluorine bonds, PFAS are resistant to degradation in the environment, can persist for decades in water and air, and accumulate in our bodies over time. This bill comprehensively addresses PFAS contamination by adopting some of the country's strongest PFAS policies.
EQUITY CONCERNS	We don't yet know the scope of our PFAS pollution problem in Maryland, although the substance is present throughout the state in waterways and even in fish that people eat. Generally speaking, communities of color are disproportionately impacted by toxic chemical exposure in consumer products, homes, and water.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Elfreth/Love
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Environmental
Community
Priority**

BILL #	SB137/HB334
TITLE	Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act of 2021
SUMMARY	Requires all buses purchased by the Maryland Department of Transportation beginning in 2023 to be electric (or other zero-emission technology), leading to a complete fleet transition.
EQUITY	Diesel emissions contribute significantly to climate pollution, as well as to the respiratory health of passengers and drivers. This most directly impacts those from underserved and low-income communities who are more likely to be using public transit.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Zucker/Korman
COMMITTEE	Education, Health and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax)



**Maryland LCV
Priority**



BILL #	SB0414/ HB583
TITLE	Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021
SUMMARY	The bill changes Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction requirements to 60% below 2006 levels by 2030 and net-zero by 2045. The bill also calls on the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to determine the percentage of state funds spent on climate change that must go to environmental justice communities. It also creates a work group to protect impacted workers. Finally, the bill provides several low-cost mitigation policies, including tree plantings in underserved urban areas and a shift to zero-emission buses.
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STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Pinsky/Stein
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax)



Maryland LCV
Priority

BILL #	SB528/HB512
TITLE	Coast Smart Siting and Design – Private Construction
SUMMARY	The bill will apply Coast Smart siting and design criteria to certain private construction projects in an effort to increase Maryland resiliency in the face of sea level rise, nuisance flooding, and increased storm events associated with climate change
EQUITY	We know that the impacts of climate change - like sea level rise - disproportionately impact underserved communities. This bill will make sure that, moving forward, any infrastructure built in areas subject to future sea level rise or high-tide flooding will be built to withstand those conditions.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Elfreh/Lehman
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

BILL #	SB674/HB1207
TITLE	Environment – Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities - Reform
SUMMARY	Reforms and strengthens the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to better identify the needs of environmental justice communities in order to guide state agency decisions on permitting and regulations.
EQUITY	The equity implications of this bill are sui generis, with the bill being a first, important step towards addressing long-ignored structural inequities in state policies and permitting
STATUS	Hearing – February 24 at 1pm
POSITION	Support With Strengthening Amendments
SPONSOR	Elfreh/Bridges
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs



Maryland LCV
Priority



Finance

BILL #	<i>HB66/SB148</i>
TITLE	Coal Community Transition Act of 2021
SUMMARY	The bill codifies dates by which Maryland's coal-fired power plants will retire, consistent with dates announced by the owners of five of the six remaining plants. The bill establishes and provides an initial allocation of funds to a new financial account to support impacted workers and support communities which have borne the brunt of coal pollution. There will also be a longer-term fossil fuel transition planning process informed by public meetings and a broad array of stakeholders
EQUITY	The bill addresses environmental injustices by 1) reducing emissions that significantly pollute our climate, air, and waters which disproportionately damage the health of low-income communities and communities of color; and 2) creating a mechanism by which impacted workers and communities can transition to a prosperous and healthful clean energy economy.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	West/Brooks
COMMITTEE	Finance

BILL #	<i>SB83/ HB298</i>
TITLE	Utility Regulation – Consideration of Climate and Labor
SUMMARY	Requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to consider the effect on climate change, and the state's efforts to achieve its legislatively enacted climate goals, of the PSC's regulatory actions linking, but not limited to, decisions on whether to approve new electricity generation plants. The bill also requires the PSC to consider fair labor standards in its regulatory proceedings.
EQUITY	The bill addresses environmental injustices by ensuring that climate pollution – which disproportionately harms low-income communities and communities of color – is considered when decisions having a significant impact on climate pollution are made by the PSC. Considerations of fair labor standards is an important part of environmental progress.
STATUS	On Second Reader – Favorable with Amendments Report by Finance
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Kramer/Charkoudian
COMMITTEE	Finance



BILL #	SB223/ HB314	Environmental Community Priority
TITLE	Plastic Bag Reduction Act	
SUMMARY	Bans plastic bags at check-out, allows jurisdictions with existing fees to continue collecting fees on paper bags. Under current law, jurisdictions must seek enabling legislation for specific taxing authority – including fees on paper at check-out. This bill would change the law to require jurisdictions to seek enabling legislation to set a price floor for retailers.	
EQUITY CONCERNS	Litter has a disproportionate impact on communities that lack adequate public services and have more blight.	
STATUS	Already Heard	
POSITION	Support	
SPONSOR	Augustine/ Lierman	
COMMITTEE	Finance	

Maryland League of Conservation Voters distributes our “hotlist” every week, to make sure you know the bills that we are tracking, where they are in the process, and what the environmental position is for those bills. Maryland LCV also produces a scorecard at the end of every legislative Session. Scores are drawn from all public record votes (Committee, Floor, Amendment) on every bill that we are tracking.

While not every bill is scored, any bill on our hotlist, or any vote that we communicate with you about by e-mail or through this Hotlist may be scored.

If you would like a bill considered for inclusion on the Hotlist, please contact Kristen Harbeson at kharbeson@mdlcv.org