



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

House Floor

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	Second Reader – Favorable With Amendments	
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority	
SPONSOR	Lierman/McCray	
COMMITTEE	Appropriations	

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 #	HB583/SB0414	 Maryland LCV Priority
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)	

BILL #	SB83/ HB298
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	First Reading – Economic Matters – Passed the Senate
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Kramer/Charkoudian
COMMITTEE	Finance



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	In the House – Passed the Senate
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Pinsky/Stein
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax)



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 #	HB334/SB137
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 #	HB427/SB540
TITLE	Federal Clean Water Act – Authority of State
SUMMARY	Prevents Maryland from waiving the 401 Water Quality Certification decision it issued on the Conowingo Dam in 2018, along with billions of dollars and a host of clean water rights as it relates to the dam over the next 50 years. Without this legislation, the state will move forward in a settlement agreement that will jeopardize the health of the bay and prevent the state from taking action until at least 2070.
EQUITY	The Susquehanna River is the largest tributary of the Chesapeake Bay and feeds about half of the Bay’s freshwater. Because the health of the Susquehanna River largely determines the health of the Bay, without strong remediation around the Conowingo Dam, the aquatic species (which local communities depend upon) and water quality in areas closest to the Dam could be decimated.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Jacobs/Hershey
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

BILL #	HB512/SB528
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 #	HB583/SB414
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 #	HB991
TITLE	Natural Resources – Forest Mitigation Banks – Qualified Preservation
SUMMARY	Forest Banking is a critical tool to ensure forest replanting through the Forest Conservation Act. In September of 2020, the Attorney General issued an opinion which sought to correct against inappropriate use of this tool by certain counties, which has disrupted the program for counties that plant or conserve forests in the forest banking program. Maryland’s Forest Conservation Act needs comprehensive reform. As drafted, however this bill reverses the AG’s opinion in a manner that would lead to significantly fewer forests, taking Maryland further from its stated goal of no-net loss of forests. Advocates have submitted essential amendments to avoid unintended negative consequences. These amendments would put a July 1, 2022 sunset to the bill, to allow for the General Assembly to create lasting legislation based on the expedited completion (December 1, 2021) of a forest study by the Hughes Center. These amendments were not adopted, and so our position remains opposed.
EQUITY	Due to a legacy of racist planning policy, underserved and urban communities typically have fewer trees than other communities. Tree cover has been linked to improved both physical and mental health and provide opportunities to develop social capital and cohesion within communities, especially those currently unserved or underserved by existing financial and healthcare infrastructure. While an indirect impact, poor forest banking policies could reduce demand for other replanting programs in general, including urban tree plantings. As currently written, the bill also increases temptation to preserve forest in banks offsite, rather than retaining or replanting onsite in these developments, which leads to fewer benefits for those that live there and in surrounding communities.
STATUS	Already heard
POSITION	Opposed
SPONSOR	Gilchrist
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

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	Already Heard
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

BILL #	SB414/ 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	In the House – Passed the Senate
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority
SPONSOR	Pinsky/Stein
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax)



Maryland LCV
Priority

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	First Reader – Environment and Transportation – Passed the Senate
POSITION	Support With Strengthening Amendments
SPONSOR	Elfreth/Bridges
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs



Maryland LCV
Priority



Health and Government Operations

BILL #	HB22/SB195	Environmental Community Priority
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	

Judiciary

BILL #	HB222/SB224
TITLE	Value My Vote Act
SUMMARY	Requires the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to provide each individual release from a correctional facility with a voter registration application and documentation informing the individual that the individual's voting rights have been restored. Additionally it eliminates structural barriers to voting for individuals in pre-trial detention.
EQUITY CONCERNS	Each election cycle, over 10,000 eligible voters are excluded from participating in the electoral process as a result of their pre-trial detention status. This is especially pronounced in communities of color and among individuals who cannot afford a cash bail or commercial bond.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Wilkins/West
COMMITTEE	Ways and Means (Judiciary)



Ways and Means

BILL #	HB222/SB224
TITLE	Value My Vote Act
SUMMARY	Requires the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to provide each individual release from a correctional facility with a voter registration application and documentation informing the individual that the individual's voting rights have been restored. Additionally it eliminates structural barriers to voting for individuals in pre-trial detention.
EQUITY CONCERNS	Each election cycle, over 10,000 eligible voters are excluded from participating in the electoral process as a result of their pre-trial detention status. This is especially pronounced in communities of color and among individuals who cannot afford a cash bail or commercial bond.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Wilkins/West
COMMITTEE	Ways and Means (Judiciary)

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



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 #	SB224/ HB222
TITLE	Election Law – Correctional Facilities – Voter Registration and Voting
SUMMARY	Requires the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to provide each individual release from a correctional facility with a voter registration application and documentation informing the individual that the individual’s voting rights have been restored. Additionally it eliminates structural barriers to voting for individuals in pre-trial detention.
EQUITY CONCERNS	Each election cycle, over 10,000 eligible voters are excluded from participating in the electoral process as a result of their pre-trial detention status. This is especially pronounced in communities of color and among individuals who cannot afford a cash bail or commercial bond.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	West/Wilkins
COMMITTEE	Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

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	Elfreth/Lehman
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

BILL #	SB540/ HB427
TITLE	Federal Clean Water Act – Authority of State
SUMMARY	Prevents Maryland from waiving the 401 Water Quality Certification decision it issued on the Conowingo Dam in 2018, along with billions of dollars and a host of clean water rights as it relates to the dam over the next 50 years. Without this legislation, the state will move forward in a settlement agreement that will jeopardize the health of the bay and prevent the state from taking action until at least 2070.
EQUITY	The Susquehanna River is the largest tributary of the Chesapeake Bay and feeds about half of the Bay’s freshwater. Because the health of the Susquehanna River largely determines the health of the Bay, without strong remediation around the Conowingo Dam, the aquatic species (which local communities depend upon) and water quality in areas closest to the Dam could be decimated.
STATUS	Already Heard
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Hershey/ Jacobs/
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs



BILL #	HB295/ SB227
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 – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Love/Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation

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	

BILL #	HB298/SB83
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	In the Senate
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Charkoudian/Kramer
COMMITTEE	Economic Matters



BILL #	HB314/SB223	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	First Reading - Finance	
POSITION	Support	
SPONSOR	Lierman/Augustine	
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters)	

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