



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 Rules

BILL #	SB199/HB114	 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. The bill was amended in the Senate to add a Western Maryland MARC Extension Study, as well as \$1 million to support small businesses negatively impacted by Purple Line construction.	
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	First Reading – House Rules – Passed the Senate	
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority	
SPONSOR	McCray/ Lierman	
COMMITTEE	Budget and Taxation	

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	Hearing 3/31 - Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters) – 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 #	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	Hearing 3/31 - Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters) – 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. Maryland LCV urges that SB674 be conformed to match the amended HB1207.
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



MARYLAND SENATE

Budget and Tax

BILL #	HB114/SB199	 <p>Maryland LCV Priority</p>
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. The bill was amended in the House to add \$1 million to support small businesses negatively impacted by Purple Line construction.	
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	First Reading – Budget and Taxation – Passed the House	
POSITION	Support – Environmental Community Priority	
SPONSOR	Lierman/McCray	
COMMITTEE	Appropriations	

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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	First Reading – Education Health and Environmental Affairs (Judicial Proceedings) – Passed the House
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Wilkins/West
COMMITTEE	Ways and Means (Judiciary)

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 – Passed the House
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Love/Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation



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	First Reading – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs – Passed the House
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. Maryland LCV strongly supports the strengthening amendments included in HB1207.
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 Reading – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs – Passed the House
POSITION	Support with Strengthening Amendments
SPONSOR	Bridges/ Elfreth
COMMITTEE	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs



**Maryland LCV
Priority**



Finance

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 – Passed the House	
POSITION	Support	
SPONSOR	Lierman/Augustine	
COMMITTEE	Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters)	

BILL #	HB832
TITLE	Public Utilities – Electric School Bus Pilot Program
SUMMARY	Creates an Electric School Bus Pilot Program implemented and paid for by Maryland’s investor-owned utilities. School systems in each utility area will be eligible to purchase zero-emission electric buses rather than diesel ones at no additional cost to the system
EQUITY CONCERNS	Diesel emissions are filled with carcinogens, particulate matter, and soot that increases lifetime risk of cancer, incidents of asthma, and heart disease. These effects are even more dangerous to children, whose lungs, heart, and other organs are still developing. In Maryland, approximately one in 10 children suffer from asthma, and this rate is higher among minority groups.
STATUS	Already Heard – Passed the House
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Fraser-Hidalgo
COMMITTEE	Economic Matters (Environment and Transportation)

Judicial Proceedings

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	First Reading – Education Health and Environmental Affairs (Judicial Proceedings) – Passed the House
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Wilkins/West
COMMITTEE	Ways and Means (Judiciary)



GOVERNOR'S DESK

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	Governor's Desk
POSITION	Support
SPONSOR	Charkoudian/Kramer
COMMITTEE	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