



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 # | <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 | Passed Third Reader |
| POSITION | Support |
| SPONSOR | Love/Elfreth |
| COMMITTEE | Environment and Transportation |


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| 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 | On Second Reader - Favorable With Amendments |
| POSITION | Support |
| SPONSOR | Charkoudian/Kramer |
| COMMITTEE | Economic Matters |



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|------------------------|---|---|
| BILL # | HB314/SB223 |  <p>Environmental Community Priority</p> |
| 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 | On Third Reader | |
| POSITION | Support | |
| SPONSOR | Lierman/Augustine | |
| COMMITTEE | Environment and Transportation (Economic Matters) | |

Appropriations

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|------------------|---|---|
| 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. | |
| 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 | |

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|------------------|---|--|
| BILL # | HB334/SB137 |  <p>Maryland LCV Priority</p> |
| 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

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|------------------|---|
| BILL # | HB66/SB148 |
| 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 | Withdrawn by Sponsor |
| POSITION | Support |
| SPONSOR | Brooks/West |
| COMMITTEE | Economic Matters |

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|------------------|--|
| 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**



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|------------------|---|
| 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 |

Environment and Transportation

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|------------------|--|
| 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) |

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|------------------|---|
| 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



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|------------------|---|
| 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 |

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| 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 |

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|------------------|--|
| 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**



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| 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 maintain the Attorney General’s Opinion into the future until comprehensive changes can be made to improve the Forest Conservation Act, as well as ensuring that re-forestation banking will still be a competitive solution to stem the tide of forest loss. These changes are in addition to amendments that ensure that farmers and forest banking conservationists that were operating under the old system are not caused undue hardship or penalized for operating under improper county codes. |
| 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 | Support with Amendments |
| SPONSOR | Gilchrist |
| COMMITTEE | Environment and Transportation |

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| 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



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|------------------|---|
| 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

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|------------------------|--|---|
| 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 | |



MARYLAND SENATE

Senate Floor

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|------------------|--|
| 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 | On Second Reader – Favorable with Amendments |
| POSITION | Support – Environmental Community Priority |
| SPONSOR | Pinsky/Stein |
| COMMITTEE | Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs (Budget and Tax) |



Maryland LCV
Priority

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|------------------|--|
| 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 | On Third Reader |
| POSITION | Support With Strengthening Amendments |
| SPONSOR | Elfreth/Bridges |
| COMMITTEE | Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs |



Maryland LCV
Priority



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

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|------------------|--|
| 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

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|------------------|--|
| 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**

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|------------------|--|
| 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 |



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|------------------|---|
| 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 |

Finance

| | |
|------------------|--|
| BILL # | HB66/SB148 |
| 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 # | 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