



Abundant, Affordable Clean Energy (AACE) Act (SB 316 / HB 398) FACT SHEET

Bill Sponsors: Sen. Benjamin Brooks (District 10), Del. Lorig Charkoudian (District 20)

BACKGROUND

Maryland faces growing demand for electricity as well as rising energy costs, making it crucial to secure reliable, affordable and clean power for our future. Clean energy is now the fastest and cheapest energy source to build, offering significant cost advantages, but our current system doesn't effectively deliver these cost savings to Maryland residents. The AACE Act will ensure Maryland can generate in state the clean energy we need while making energy bills more affordable and the grid reliable. By generating more clean energy in the state of Maryland, we can reduce our dependence on out-of-state dirty power, create local jobs, and make progress to keep utility bills affordable.

- Current energy markets don't adequately protect ratepayers from rising costs
- Maryland needs more in-state clean power generation to ensure reliability and affordability
- Electricity use accounts for more than one-fifth of Maryland's emissions

WHAT THE AACE ACT WILL DO

- Creates a comprehensive clean energy program that includes:
 - Battery storage to keep our grid reliable
 - Restructured financing and procurement for solar programs
 - Support for existing in-state nuclear power
- Protects ratepayers by:
 - Sharing profits from energy generation with customers
 - Capping costs for clean energy programs
 - Using data center tax revenue to offset energy costs
- Prioritizes in-state clean energy projects to reduce transmission costs and create local jobs

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR MARYLAND

Without intervention, Maryland risks facing higher energy costs and potential reliability issues as demand grows. The AACE Act provides a clear path to reliable, affordable clean energy while protecting ratepayers. By generating more clean power in Maryland, we reduce the need for expensive transmission lines and create local jobs. The AACE Act's innovative profit-sharing ensures that as clean energy becomes more profitable, the savings go back to Maryland families. This approach helps us meet our climate goals while keeping energy reliable and affordable for all Marylanders.



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**Reliable and Affordable Energy for a
Strong Economy and Healthy Climate**

Nearshore Farm and Finance Act (SB898 / HB1175)

(Nutrient Management – Tidal Buffer – Vegetative
Buffers and Restriction on Fertilizer Application)

FACT SHEET

Bill Sponsor: Senator Sara Love (District 16), Delegate Dana Stein (District 11B)

BACKGROUND

Protecting the Chesapeake Bay requires smart solutions that support both our environment and our farming communities. The Nearshore Farm Finance Act achieves a balanced approach to both goals by establishing waterfront farm buffers while providing financial compensation to both landowners and tenant farmers. The bill increases the setback for nutrient application within this sensitive area of land. At the same time, it provides generous incentives for farmers to install long-term, targeted conservation practices.

- Current setbacks from tidal waters are insufficient to protect the Bay from agricultural runoff
- Conservation practices installed in nearshore areas are six times as effective as those installed further upland

WHAT THE ACT WILL DO

- It prevents excess pollution from agricultural fertilizer applications that would otherwise be permitted within 100 feet of Maryland tidal water.
- It further accelerates nutrient removal with the opportunity for farmers to voluntarily enroll in installing high-performing, permanent buffers in these most-effective, nearshore target areas.
- Creates the first incentive program to provide value to tenant farmers who work with the State on targeted conservation practices and fertilizer application setbacks.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR MARYLAND

Maryland's agricultural sector has not fully achieved nutrient and sediment reduction goals to protect the bay. This bill targets the most efficient areas to install conservation practices and provides an incentive package to ensure farmer participation.



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The CHERISH Our Communities Act (SB 978 / HB 1484) FACT SHEET

Bill Sponsors: Senator Clarence Lam (District 12), Delegate Jazz Lewis (District 24)

BACKGROUND

The CHERISH Our Communities Act (Cumulative Harms to Environmental Restoration for Improving our Shared Health) addresses a critical gap in Maryland's environmental protection system. Currently, when considering new permits to pollute, Maryland does not evaluate how multiple pollution sources in one area combine to affect public health. This means new permits are reviewed in isolation, without considering the total (or cumulative) impact on local residents' health. Following the lead of states including New Jersey, New York, and Minnesota, the CHERISH Our Communities Act will reform Maryland's permitting system to better protect communities that already face heavy pollution burdens.

- Communities across Maryland face health risks from multiple pollution sources in their neighborhoods
- Many high-impact facilities currently avoid public notice requirements and transparency measures
- Maryland lacks the legal authority to make permitting decisions based on environmental justice data

WHAT THE ACT WILL DO

- Creates new permitting requirements for facilities that have the biggest impact on nearby communities
- Requires meaningful community engagement and public notice for all major pollution permits
- Ensures permits that would increase pollution in overburdened communities must include:
 - Strong conditions to reduce pollution impacts
 - Community benefits agreements to support local residents
- Gives Maryland Department of Environment clear authority to consider environmental justice when making permit decisions

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR MARYLAND

The CHERISH Act puts Maryland at the forefront of environmental justice reform by addressing the combined effects of multiple polluters on community health. This reform ensures that neighborhoods already dealing with pollution burdens aren't forced to accept even more burdens without proper safeguards and benefits. This bill creates a fairer system where community voices matter in decisions that affect their health and well-being. By following proven models from other states, Maryland can protect its most vulnerable communities while providing clear guidelines for industry.



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Addressing the Effects of
Polluters on Community Health



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Coal Dust Clean Up and Asthma Mitigation Fund (SB 882 / HB 1088)

FACT SHEET

Bill Sponsor: Senator Jim Rosapepe (District 21), Delegate Dana Stein (District 11B)

BACKGROUND

Maryland has a successful program that charges a fee on oil transport and allocates funds to help address oil spills and protect communities. This new legislative proposal builds on that model by addressing another pressing concern: the impact of coal transport on our communities and climate. Coal traveling through Maryland creates significant air pollution, affecting the health of residents living along transport routes. Additionally, the burning of coal creates greenhouse gas emissions and is contrary to fighting climate change. This bill creates a dedicated funding stream to address these impacts while supporting communities most affected by coal pollution.

- Coal transport creates significant air quality issues in nearby communities
- Burning coal conflicts with the state's climate goals
- Communities along transport routes face higher rates of asthma and respiratory issues
- Current funding for greenhouse gas pollution mitigation is insufficient

WHAT THE FUND WILL DO

- Establishes a fee of \$13 per ton of coal transported through Maryland
- Creates a dedicated Fossil Fuel Mitigation Fund to address pollution impacts
- Directs 40% of revenue to support overburdened and underserved communities affected by coal transport
- Provides \$5 million annually for asthma treatment programs targeting residents living along coal transport routes
- Generates approximately \$300 million per year for climate programs

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR MARYLAND

This legislation provides a fair and practical solution to address the health and environmental impacts of coal transport through our state. By creating a dedicated funding source, we can better support communities that have long borne the burden of coal pollution. The fund ensures that those most affected by coal transport receive direct health benefits through asthma treatment programs, while also supporting broader climate initiatives. This approach follows Maryland's successful model of holding polluters accountable while generating resources for community protection and environmental cleanup.



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**A Fair and Practical Solution to
Health and Environmental Impacts**