



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

January 17, 2021

Dear Baltimore City Council,

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation applauds the effort to “take all necessary actions to make Baltimore a carbon neutral city by 2050”, as stated in Bill Item # 21-0075R. If adopted, this bill would improve public health, protect the Chesapeake Bay, and further social justice. **We urge a favorable recommendation from the Health, Environment, and Technology Committee, with an amendment to pass a net zero resolution by 2045, as well as additions to equity language.**

Page 1, Lines 3-5: FOR the purpose of calling on the Mayor, the Baltimore City Council, the Baltimore City Administrator, the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, and the Baltimore Commission on Sustainability to take all necessary actions to make Baltimore a carbon neutral city by 2050 a net zero city by 2045.

In order to align with Maryland’s state goals of net zero by 2045, as stated in the 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reductions Plan (GGRP)¹, we recommend that the language of the resolution be changed from “carbon neutral by 2050” to “net zero by 2045.” In addition to positioning Baltimore more favorably for state funding, this change would enable Baltimore to be a climate leader among U.S. municipalities.

Page 2, Lines 3-5: The City’s initiative to reduce greenhouse gases can alleviate health burdens made worse by pollutants, and reduce added stressors that greatly impact residents in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty. Furthermore, it is imperative that these initiatives be implemented equitably with respect to these neighborhoods and communities that have historically borne the brunt of pollution and its associated health impacts.

Climate change poses a multitude of challenges for Baltimore. In recent years Baltimore residents have experienced [record rainfall amounts](#), strong storms that flood and [cripple city infrastructure](#), and sweltering [heat islands in underserved areas](#) where temperatures rise 10 to 20 degrees more than surrounding neighborhoods due to a lack of natural landscape. Moreover, the effects of climate change are not felt equally – Black and brown communities are more vulnerable to climate impacts than white communities.²

¹ “Maryland Releases Bold New Plan to Achieve Climate Goals.” *Maryland Department of the Environment*, 19 Feb. 2021, <https://news.maryland.gov/mde/2021/02/19/maryland-releases-bold-new-plan-to-achieve-climate-goals/>.

² EPA. 2021. Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States: A Focus on Six Impacts. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA 430-R-21-003.

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Though it is non-binding, this resolution will help spur conversations about the challenges and opportunities associated with moving Baltimore to a cleaner, safer, and more environmentally sustainable framework.

We encourage all members of the Council to vote in support of this bill. Together, we can make tremendous progress to preserve the health of residents, the Bay, and our state.

In solidarity,

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