



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION  
*Saving a National Treasure*

March 14, 2022

Dear Baltimore City Council,

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation applauds the effort to make “City operations achieve net-zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050”, as stated in Bill Item # 21-0161. 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 amendments to pass a net zero resolution by 2045 with interim goals, limits on net zero offsets, as well as additions to language regarding community engagement.**

In order to align with Maryland’s state goals of net zero by 2045, as stated in the 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reductions Plan (GGRP)<sup>1</sup>, we recommend that the language of the resolution be changed from “net zero by 2050” to “net zero by 2045.” We also recommend setting emission reduction goals of 30% by 2025 and 60% by 2030 in order to bring in line with the Carbon Neutral Resolution [recently adopted](#) by Baltimore City Council. In addition to positioning Baltimore more favorably for state funding, this change would enable Baltimore to be a climate leader among U.S. municipalities.

The definition of net zero emissions should be changed to limit the use of offsets. The City should first seek to reduce the amount of carbon released through its activities before resorting to offsets. Offsets should be reserved where emission reductions are cost-prohibitive or impossible to reduce with existing technology.

Climate change poses a multitude of challenges for Baltimore. In recent years Baltimore residents have experienced record rainfall<sup>2</sup>, strong storms that flood and

---

<sup>1</sup> “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/>.

<sup>2</sup> Dance, Scott. “2018 Was Baltimore's Wettest Year on Record. Here Are the Final Numbers.” *Baltimoresun.com*, Baltimore Sun, 30 June 2019, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/weather/bs-md-rain-record-numbers-20181115-story.html>.

OFFICERS

Elizabeth Oliver-Farrow  
CHAIR

Otis S. Jones  
VICE CHAIR

Hilary Harp Falk  
PRESIDENT AND CEO

David A. Fogle  
TREASURER

William A. Agee  
SECRETARY

TRUSTEES

Marnie Abramson

Dara C. Bachman

R. Bruce Bradley

Joan P. Brock

George L. Bunting Jr.

Michael J. Chiaramonte

Brian Cobb

Margaret M. Freeman

Alexandra Grayson

Jennifer E. Green

Harry S. Gruner

Ann D. Horner

Robert A. Kinsley II

Katie Z. Leavy

Jonathan D. Manekin

Anne Mehringer

Pamela B. Murphy

Mamie A. Parker, Ph.D.

Crystal Patterson

Anna R. Pauletta

Ann Pelham

Nathaniel J. Rose

Janine J. Smith

J. Sedwick Sollers III

R. Todd Stravitz, MD

Sandra E. Taylor

Preston M. White

Robert N. Whitescarver

Stephen M. Wolf

HONORARY  
TRUSTEES

Donald F. Boesch, Ph.D.

W. Russell G. Byers Jr.

D. Keith Campbell

Louisa C. Duemling

Richard L. Franyo

Alan R. Griffith

Carolyn Groobey

Ann Fritz Hackett

C.A. Porter Hopkins

T. Gaylon Layfield III

Harry T. Lester

Byron F. Marchant

M. Lee Marston

Wayne A. Mills

Arnold I. Richman

Marie W. Ridder

James E. Rogers

Truman T. Semans

Simon Sidamon-Eristoff

Jennifer Stanley

Thomas H. Stoner

Bishop Eugene Taylor Sutton

Alan L. Wurtzel

damage city infrastructure<sup>3</sup>, and sweltering heat islands in underserved areas<sup>4</sup> where temperatures rise 10 to 20 degrees more than surrounding neighborhoods due to a lack of natural landscape. Public participation and feedback on the City's net-zero transition plans is crucial to ensure the greatest level of transparency and accountability within the process. For these reasons, we recommend an amendment that increases the opportunity for public input:

*The Office shall develop rules and regulations to require additional transparency and community-based public participation mechanisms to provide input and track progress of the net zero transition.*

If passed, this ordinance 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,

Julieta Rodrigo  
Urban and Community Resilience Manager  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Phone: (443) 482-2107  
Email: [jrodrigo@cbf.org](mailto:jrodrigo@cbf.org)

---

<sup>3</sup> Campbell, Colin, and Kevin Rector. "East 26th Street in Baltimore Sinking Again near Site of 2014 Collapse - Raising Questions about Inspections." *Baltimoresun.com*, Baltimore Sun, 26 Nov. 2018, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/baltimore-city/bs-md-ci-east-26th-sinking-20181126-story.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Ready, Roxanne, et al. "Code Red: The Role of Trees." *Capital News Service Maryland*, Capital News Service Maryland, 15 Aug. 2019, <https://cnsmaryland.org/interactives/summer-2019/code-red/role-of-trees.html>.