



TO: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM: Brittany Vendryes, Esq., Executive Director
SUBMITTING AGENCY: Environmental Control Board
DATE: June 7, 2023

Dear Mr. President and Members:

The Baltimore City Environmental Control Board (“ECB”) has been requested to review City Council Bill # 23-0385, Study and Report – Baltimore City Climate Resilience Authority. The purpose of the bill is to require the Director of Finance, the City Solicitor, the Director of Transportation, the Director of Public Works, the Director of Planning, and the Director of Sustainability to submit a report detailing how Baltimore City may establish a local climate resilience authority originally authorized by Chapter 236 of the Acts of 2020, now codified as 7 Title 22 {“Resilience Infrastructure”} of the State Local Government Article.

The ECB is an independent administrative hearing board that adjudicates contested environmental citations; however, in addition to the adjudication of environmental citations, the ECB is home to BMORE Beautiful, a grassroots peer-to-peer beautification program. Though the bill does not require the ECB to participate in submitting the report, the bill was referred to this agency for response. While the main function of the agency is not particularly relevant to the issue at hand, BMORE Beautiful’s communities have expressed concerns regarding climate change. As such, the ECB would be remiss not to pass on their concerns.

The biggest concerns frequently raised by BMORE Beautiful neighborhoods are:

- Higher average temperatures,
- More frequent and longer heatwaves,
- Milder winters and a longer growing seasons, and
- More intense storms and flooding.

Outside of the specific neighborhoods that we partner with, some of the most disadvantaged areas of Baltimore could benefit from a climate resilience authority. Specifically, the most disadvantaged areas of Baltimore tend to have the least tree canopies. The effects of climate change are more pronounced in these areas because they are more directly impacted by increasingly intense summers. Without canopies as a buffer, the direct heat is amplified by the materials used to build

Baltimore's iconic rowhouses and creates an urban heat island. The result is that Baltimore is hotter than its surrounding counties.

Due to this, the ECB is in support of creating a local climate resilience authority; however, we would not have any input on *how* to create it. If requested, the BMORE Beautiful liaisons can further testify to community concerns.

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