



Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022

Senate Bill 528, Sen. Pinsky

This bold legislative package establishes a comprehensive set of environmental actions and targets, with the goal of putting Maryland on track to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. It will promote building energy efficiency standards and electrification, establish climate-related workforce training and mitigation efforts for vulnerable communities, enhance control of methane emissions, expand adoption of zero emission vehicles, and strengthen agencies' planning efforts.



As introduced, the legislation will:

Buildings

- Sets a goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 and a 60% reduction from 2006 levels by 2030 (vs. the current goal of only a 40% reduction by 2030)
- Establishes standards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings
 - For state-owned buildings, achieve 30% by 2030, net-zero by 2035
 - For private buildings, achieve 20% by 2030, 40% by 2035, net zero by 2040
- Requires that new buildings beginning in 2023 meet all space and water heating demand without use of fossil fuels, with limited exceptions.
- Ensures green energy transformation is incorporated into the building code by 2023, including solar energy and EV charging.
- Establishes a program to support funding of net zero schools.



Environmental Justice

- Requires the Department of the Environment to identify communities disproportionately affected by climate change and work to build climate equity and resilience within those communities.
- Establishes a council of political leaders, citizens, and industry stakeholders to promote planning for effective workforce development and opportunities in industries required to combat climate change.
- Creates a Climate Justice Corps for young adults to complete projects to mitigate the impacts of climate change in affected communities in order to provide them with academic credit and work skills training.
- Establishes a property tax exemption for community solar investments that primarily serve low and moderate income households.

Methane Emissions

- Strengthens management of methane emissions from landfills.

Public Vehicles and Planning

- Requires county school boards to purchase zero-emission school buses after 2024, with limited exceptions, and requires all state passenger cars purchases starting in 2027 to be zero-emission. Other state vehicles, with limited exceptions, are to be zero emission by 2036.
- Requires each state agency engaging in long term planning to consider the climate impacts of the agency's decisions.

Assessment

The Senate Legislation is strong. Sierra Club and partners will be recommending amendments to make it even better, including a longer window of dedicated funding, and improvements to the provisions related to buildings and energy efficiency.

There are several House bills which will cover this same content, which we will be evaluating soon.

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