



# Maryland Climate Equity Act

Photo: Chesapeake Bay Program

## Key Supporters

- Center for Progressive Reform
- Chesapeake Climate Action Network
- Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Frack Free Frostburg
- Greenbelt Climate Action Network
- HoCoClimateAction.org
- Locust Point Community Garden
- MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
- Maryland Sierra Club
- Maryland Legislative Coalition
- NAACP Maryland State Conference
- Our Revolution
- Safe Healthy Playing Fields
- ShoreRivers
- Strong Future Maryland
- Waterkeepers Chesapeake

## The Problem

Maryland’s public agencies take a sweeping array of actions that affect residents and communities but do not meaningfully assess how their decisions may contribute to environmental injustice, climate change, and worker or labor impacts. Historically, state actions have contributed to public health disparities for BIPOC, low-income, and limited English proficient communities.



These communities are often disproportionately burdened by environmental hazards that include exposure to polluted air, waterways, and landscapes and other negative outcomes. These hazards ripple through the community creating disparities in health, wealth, and even life expectancy.

Some of these hazards Marylanders face are well-researched and documented, including:

- Low-income communities of color in Maryland are more likely to live in close proximity to facilities that release toxic chemicals.
- Leaking underground storage tanks are more prevalent in low-income communities of color.
- Low-income Black communities in Maryland face greater cancer risks and exposure to air toxics, primarily due to highway pollution and other mobile sources of air pollution (i.e. airplanes, trains, lawnmowers, construction vehicles, and farm machinery). These risks decrease as the proportion of white people in each census tract increases.
- Black people in Maryland are more likely to die from heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Black Marylanders are also 1.1 times more likely to suffer from asthma, and 2.3 times more likely to die from asthma, compared to white people.

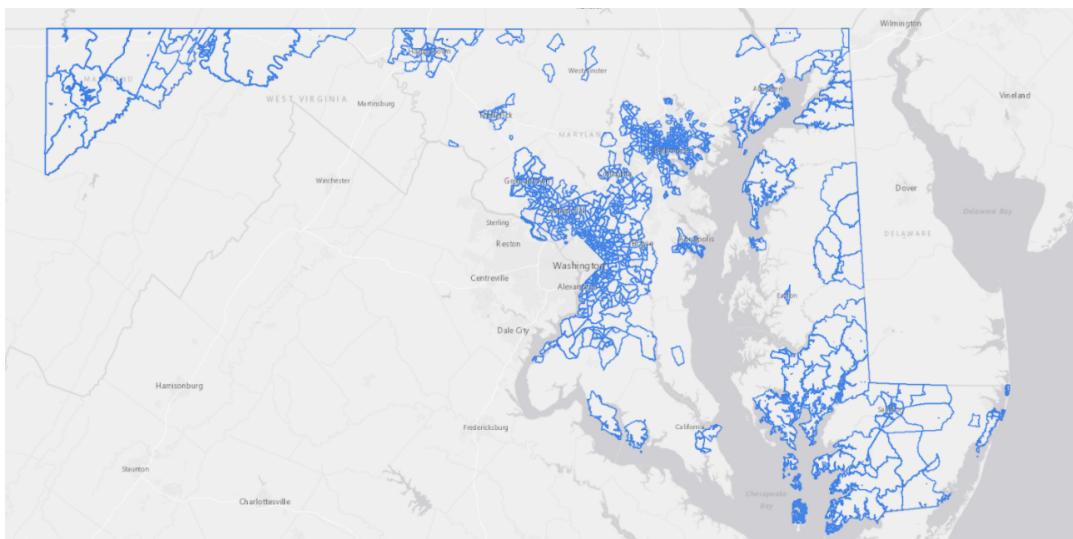
## The Solution: Maryland Climate Equity Act

The Maryland Climate Equity Act (2022), sponsored by Senator Ronald Watson & Delegate Regina T. Boyce, would:

- Ensure that state agencies, in their decision-making processes, meaningfully assess a proposed action's potential climate impact and effect on underserved and overburdened communities, communities facing environmental injustice, and workers and jobs in Maryland.
- Create a quantifiable way to identify and protect overburdened communities, engage in meaningful communication, and prioritize them for investment.
- Deters state decisions, such as, approving:
  - New construction of harmful facilities or infrastructure near overburdened communities;
  - Permits that allow for increases in greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel infrastructure;
  - A new highway or highway expansion near an environmental justice community;
  - The transition of a coal plant to an oil or natural gas plant in an overburdened community; and
  - The project or development won't benefit Maryland workers.



***Maryland residents cannot wait any longer for these past-due considerations.***



Map of 'underserved communities in Maryland.'

### Contact

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**If you or your organization would like to support the Maryland Climate Equity Act, please sign up here.**