Dear Senators and Delegates,

We, the undersigned organizations, ask the Maryland General Assembly to reaffirm the values and purpose of the Maryland Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), and urge its full implementation on this, its fiftieth anniversary as outlined in resolution HJ0001.

Whereas we recognize the singular natural beauty of our State, the quiet grandeur of the Chesapeake Bay, the majesty of the Appalachians, the verdant lands of the Piedmont, and the abundant gifts of the coastal plain of the Eastern Shore; and

Whereas, we recognize that all living things are dependent upon a healthful environment; and

Whereas, we recognize that the full expression of human dignity is incompatible with a degraded environment; and

Whereas, we recognize that a sustainable, regenerative ecosystem and climate conducive to human life are essential to support a vibrant society and economy; and

Whereas, we - like our ancestors before us - are the guardians of the earth for generations yet to come; and

Whereas 2023 is the fiftieth anniversary of the Maryland Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) which passed unanimously (minus one) in the House and Senate in 1973; and

Whereas MEPA recognizes that each person has a fundamental and inalienable right to a healthful environment; and

Whereas MEPA states that "the protection, preservation, and enhancement of the State's diverse environment is necessary for the maintenance of public health and welfare and the continued viability of the economy of the State and is a matter of the highest public priority"; and

Whereas MEPA states that all State agencies are to conduct their affairs with an awareness that they are stewards of the air, land, water, living and historic resources, and that they have an obligation to protect the environment for the use and enjoyment of this and all future generations; and

Whereas a significant number of States, along with one-hundred and sixty-one nations of the global community, including the United States, have recognized the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment;

Therefore, we, the undersigned organizations, hereby reaffirm the principle established in the Maryland Environmental Policy Act of 1973 that a healthful and sustainable environment is a fundamental and inalienable human right. We call upon the members of the Maryland General Assembly and the State to rededicate itself, its agencies, and all concerned stakeholders to further the development and implementation of environmental laws, practices and policies, as called for by the Maryland Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), for the benefit of both current and future generations.

Signed

Nina Beth Cardin, Director
Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights

Supporting Organizations

Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation
Arundel Rivers Federation
Assateague Coastal Trust
Audubon Mid-Atlantic
Be the Change
Be the Change Bmore
Beth Am Environmental Team
Beth Am Synagogue Environmental Team
Cedar Lane Environmental Justice Ministry, Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Climate XChange Maryland
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
Echotopia LLC
Elders Climate Action Network
Episcopal Cathedral of the Incarnation
Indivisible Howard County
Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake
Interfaith Power & Light (DE.MD.NoVA)
Ji'Aire's Workgroup
Justice & Witness Action Network -- Maryland (Central Atlantic Conference, United Church of Christ)
Maryland Children's Environmental Health Coalition [MD CEHC]
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Maryland Ornitological Society
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
NeighborSpace of Baltimore County
Policy Foundation of Maryland
Safe Skies Maryland
Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
Sierra Club Maryland
Southern Maryland Poor People's Campaign
St. Luke's Episcopal Church
St. Margaret's Church (Episcopal)
The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Trash Free Maryland
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
Waterkeepers Chesapeake