



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ROGER BERLINER
COUNCIL PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 1

CHAIRMAN
TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

July 26, 2017

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

It is our understanding that the nine states that make up the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) are nearing a decision on whether to adopt stricter standards on carbon emissions from power plants. We urge you to take a strong stand against climate change by supporting an increase in the annual emissions reduction target to 5 percent.

This action is urgently needed given the very real ill effects we are seeing right now from decades of pumping fossil fuel emissions into our atmosphere. More frequent and intense heat waves, increased air pollution, the disruption to our food supply, the acidification of the oceans and the loss of marine life threaten the entire planet and our state.

The Chesapeake Bay region is among the most vulnerable places in the country to sea level rise. Already, at least 13 islands in the Chesapeake Bay have disappeared entirely as average sea levels rose one foot during the 20th century. Sea level rise in the Chesapeake could reach 17-28 inches above 1990 levels by the end of this century and along with other climate change impacts pose an existential threat to our state.

The urgency with which more aggressive emission reduction goals are needed has only increased in recent months given our federal government's shortsighted and negligent decision to withdraw from the 2015 Paris Agreement. It is more important than ever that state and local governments do their part. And it has become increasingly clear that doing so will not hurt our economy. Power generators under existing RGGI standards have successfully adapted to current standards while continuing to provide a reliable supply of electricity.

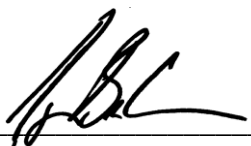
In Montgomery County, we are on pace to meet our goal of reducing countywide greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent compared to the 2005 baseline by 2050. We buy all of the county's energy from renewable sources, gauge the energy output of large commercial buildings, are the first county in the country to establish a Green Bank to help finance energy efficiency projects and are aggressively pursuing solar power and microgrids to reduce our carbon footprint and our energy costs.

The regional cap-and-trade system established by RGGI in 2009 has proven to be a success, with 2015 power plant emissions in the participating states falling 6.3 percent below the cap and electricity prices

across the region decreasing by 3.4 percent on average compared to a 7.2 percent increase in other states. During this time, the nine RGGI states reduced carbon emissions by 16 percent more than other states while experiencing 3.6 percent more economic growth, according to a 2016 study by the Acadia Center.

Even stronger standards will bring stronger results. Accordingly, we urge you to support an increase in the annual emissions reduction target to 5 percent.

Sincerely,



Roger Berliner
President
Montgomery County Council



Hans Riemer
Vice President
Montgomery County Council



Marc Elrich
At-Large
Montgomery County Council



Nancy Floreen
At-Large
Montgomery County Council



Tom Hucker
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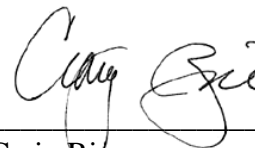
Sidney Katz
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Nancy Navarro
District 4
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Craig Rice
District 2
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CC: Benjamin Grumbles, Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment
Kevin Hughes, Chairman, Maryland Public Service Commission