

Montgomery County Council Transportation & Environment Committee
Legislation: Bill 3-22 Legislative Branch-Climate Assessment Required
Organization: Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Position: Favorable with Amendments
Hearing: March 1, 2022

Dear Chairman Hucker and Council Members,

The Cedar Lane Church Environmental Justice Ministry supports the Climate Assessment bill (3-22) with amendments that will help Montgomery County meet its Climate Emergency Resolution of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2027 and 100% by 2035. As a faith group holding respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, and the inherent worth and dignity of every person, the Council's unanimous support of and co-sponsorship of this important bill is outstanding as Montgomery County may be one of the first counties in the US to enact a climate assessment bill.

Ensuring that every action and decision taken by Montgomery County will be assessed for Climate will be critical as the County moves forward in its huge task of meeting its reduced emission goals. This is only one of many actions that will be required to fully address our climate emergency. Passage of the Building Energy Performance Standards bill, movement away from dependence on fossil fuels and Community Choice Aggregation are also key to the County's success.

We support the four amendments proposed by the CAP Coalition that mirror language in the Racial Equity and Justice Act. They are:

1. *In (c), **Time for Submission**, require that the Climate Assessment be provided no later than 7 days before the public hearing to give time for public review and comment.*
2. *In (d)(2)(A), add the word 'quantity' to clarify that the **climate assessment** must include an estimation of how much greenhouse gas mitigation will be achieved with the action.*
3. *In (e), **Compliance** section, only allow waiving the climate assessment requirement in the case of an 'expedited' bill.*
4. *In (f) on the **Annual Report**, require an assessment of **the cumulative** results of legislation to measure progress toward meeting the goals of climate emergency, not just a summary of the climate assessments done that year.*

Finally, we agree with the CAP Coalition that annual statistics must be available for the County to monitor its compliance with the Climate Assessment bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to present.

Nanci Wilkinson

Environmental Justice Ministry Team

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

