



February 1, 2022

The Honorable R. Lee Ware
Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources
Delegate, Virginia General Assembly
Pocahontas Building, Room E308
900 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Opposing HB 1301 Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act; repeals Act

Dear Delegate Ware:

On behalf of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), we are writing to oppose the repeal of the Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act and encourage the Commonwealth of Virginia's continued participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

Climate change is a regional priority for COG, the association of local governments in metropolitan Washington. As such, COG supports efforts and actions at the local, state, and federal levels to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change on health, infrastructure, and the economy. RGGI is a cooperative, market-based approach to cap and reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions that is causing climate change, and it is consistent with COG's legislative priorities.

In 2020, COG wrote a letter supporting HB 981, the Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act that facilitated the establishment of a CO₂ cap and trade program and the Commonwealth joining the multi-state RGGI cooperative. Virginia's participation in RGGI supports policies that help meet the region's climate change goals, expand access to clean energy finance, and support flood resiliency initiatives and financing mechanisms. In the first year of participation, the sale of carbon emission allowances has generated roughly \$228 million in revenue in Virginia that has directly supported local communities through the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) and the Housing Innovations in Energy Efficiency (HIEE) program that reduces energy bills for low-income Virginians. Within the COG region, \$3,872,900 million has been awarded to support local flood resiliency planning projects and \$3,210,000 million to support 243 affordable housing units.

The economic and environmental value of RGGI is only beginning to be seen in Virginia. Repealing the Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act or in any way suspending Virginia's participation in the RGGI cooperative will adversely impact public health, environmental stewardship, and the economy. As such, CEEPC, on behalf of COG, opposes HB 1301 and urges retaining the current Act and associated programs. Please contact Jeffrey King, COG Director of Climate, Energy, and Air Programs at (202) 962-3238 or jking@mwcog.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Koran Saines". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Koran T. Saines
Chair, Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

Attachment: COG 2020 Letter of Support for House Bill 981 to Enable the Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act

cc: Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor
Honorable J. Chapman Petersen, Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources
Honorable Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
Honorable Elizabeth Guzman
Honorable Paul Krizek
Honorable Marcus Simon
Honorable Charniele Herring
Honorable David Reid
Honorable David Bulova
Honorable Suhas Subramanyam
Honorable Kenneth Plum
Honorable Michelle Maldonado
Honorable Kathleen Murphy
Honorable Irene Shin
Honorable Eileen Filler-Corn
Honorable Karrie Delaney
Honorable Gwendolyn Gooditis
Honorable Danica Roem
Honorable Kathy Tran
Honorable Vivian Watts
Honorable Mark Sickles
Honorable Mark Keam
Honorable David LaRock
Honorable Briana Sewell
Honorable Daniel Helmer
Honorable Kaye Kory
Honorable Patrick Hope
Honorable Richard (Rip) Sullivan
Honorable Alfonso Lopez
Honorable Luke Torian



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

February 8, 2020

The Honorable Charniele L. Herring
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building
900 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Support for HB 981, Legislative Initiatives to Enable the Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act

Dear Delegate Herring,

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC), and the Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC), we are writing to offer our support for your bill (HB 981) that would enter Virginia into the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

The legislation would bring Virginia into RGGI, joining our regional neighbor Maryland, and provide that revenues from the sale of carbon allowances in part, to be directed to municipalities to develop low-income energy efficiency programs and flood resiliency initiatives. Supporting climate and flood resiliency initiatives is a COG policy priority and the bill's passage will directly assist local municipalities in their flood control and management efforts.

Please contact Steve Walz, COG's Director of Environmental Programs at (202) 962-3205 or swalz@mwkog.org if you have any questions.

Thank you for your bill that would provide funding for flood resiliency, in addition to entering VA into RGGI.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Sze'.

Hon. Daniel Sze
Chair, Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jon Stehle'.

Hon. Jon Stehle
Chair, Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee

cc: The Honorable Alfonso Lopez
The Honorable Mark L. Keam