

County Government Officials,

As the MACO representative to the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC), I want to ensure regular communication with county government leadership statewide on the myriad of topics impacting local government within MCCC's scope of activity, as well as highlight the best practices and important work being done by counties and partners. Please pass this information along to peers, staff, and interested community members. Feel free to contact me with any comments and/or suggestions so I can effectively represent the collective county government voice with MACO staff and at Commission meetings and activities.

Highlights from the June 20th MCCC meeting and other items of interest include the following:

- **Recent Updates.** The Chair (MDE Secretary Ben Grumbles) made general opening comments including:
 - o On May 22nd Governor Hogan announced the Clean and Renewable Energy Standard (CARES) of achieving 100% clean electricity by 2040. <https://governor.maryland.gov/2019/05/22/governor-hogan-outlines-bold-energy-strategy/>
 - o New Jersey adopted rules to rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).
 - o Pennsylvania Governor Wolf announced that his administration supported joining RGGI and urged state legislators to authorize the state's participation.
- **GGRA Draft Plan.** The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) draft plan overview is on the MCCC website <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/ClimateChange/MCCC/Pages/Commission.aspx> under the meeting materials section for the June 20th, 2019 meeting. The presentation reviews the state plan to reach the legislatively mandated goals of a **25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030** and a **40% reduction by 2040**. The presentation also broadly explains how the state will address the Governor's goal of 100% clean electricity by 2040. Specific details for the latter are being developed and are expected to result in Administration-sponsored legislation during the 2020 General Assembly session.
- **Outreach Update.** The Education and Community Outreach (ECO) Work Group announced a goal to provide MCCC information to the public in locations where citizens already connect with government, such as Motor Vehicle Administration centers and county government buildings. Lisa Nissley at MDE (Lisa.Nissley@Maryland.gov) is the point of contact for this effort.
- **Review of Legislative Session.** During the 2019 legislative session, several updates were made to 2018 legislation requiring action on saltwater intrusion and local nuisance flood plans. By October 1, 2019 ("Fall 2019"), Maryland will issue guidance for local governments about the collection of baseline data and development of nuisance flood plans. Local nuisance flood plans will be due October 1, 2020.
- **Climate Leadership Training.** The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Climate Leadership Academy (CLA) is in the process of developing a one-day program specifically for Local Elected Officials. CLA provides foundational climate change education and executive training to assist partners in developing and implementing sound climate change initiatives locally. <https://www.mdclimateacademy.org>
- **Understanding Blue Carbon.** The term "Blue Carbon" was explained as the special carbon sequestration benefit inherent to shoreline restoration. Restore America's Estuaries has a summary of Coastal Blue Carbon available here: <https://estuaries.org/bluecarbon/>. NOAA also had a podcast about Coastal Blue Carbon.
- **Resiliency Through Restoration.** DNR's *Resiliency through Restoration Initiative* is a state capital program that demonstrates how nature can help protect communities from climate change impacts. A summary of the initiative can be found at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/ccs/Pages/Resiliency-through-Restoration.aspx> A link to a map to view projects happening nearby can be found

at <https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=4b2608d5e34d40cfb77b50e16805649f>

- **Data Response Due by July 10.** MACO Research Director, Robin Clark Eilenberg, sent a data call to Maryland County Administrators requesting responses by July 10th to two questions regarding county mitigation and adaptation efforts to-date as well as a 5 to 10 year projection for what advances may be practical and any related challenges.
- **Recent Noteworthy Climate Change Articles.** Recent articles germane to county governments and the topic of climate change include the following:

<https://www.governing.com/topics/transportation-infrastructure/gov-new-york-oregon-carbon-dioxide-emissions-greenhouse-gases.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/19/climate/seawalls-cities-cost-climate-change.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage>

<https://www.npr.org/2019/06/18/724343789/going-zero-carbon-is-all-the-rage-but-will-it-slow-climate-change>

<https://icma.org/blog-posts/data-behind-disaster>

<https://icma.org/blog-posts/top-5-tips-planning-preparing-and-adapting-climate-change>

Thanks for everything each of you do every day to mitigate the future severity of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and provide situational awareness. I wish everyone a safe and happy July 4th holiday.

Mark Belton
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