



# MARYLAND'S PARTICIPATION WITH THE UNITED STATES CLIMATE ALLIANCE



## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Governor's Office & Maryland General Assembly  
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**Wes Moore**  
Governor

**Aruna Miller**  
Lieutenant Governor

**Serena McIlwain**  
Secretary

**Suzanne Dorsey**  
Deputy Secretary

*Cover Photo: Governor Wes Moore signs Executive Order 01.01.2024.19, directing all state agencies to craft Climate Implementation Plans (CIPs), at Henderson-Hopkins School in East Baltimore on June 4, 2024.*

This report was authored in compliance with **MD. Environment Code § 2-1401 (2023)**, which defines Maryland's role in the U.S. Climate Alliance and stipulates what should be included in its annual report as follows.

(a) (1) On or before July 1, 2018, the Governor shall include the State as a member of the U.S. Climate Alliance.

(2) The Governor may withdraw the State from the U.S. Climate Alliance only if the General Assembly enacts a law to approve the withdrawal.

(b) On or before December 1, 2018, and on or before December 1 each year thereafter, the Governor shall report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Environment and Transportation Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the State's participation in the U.S. Climate Alliance, including:

(1) Any collaborations or partnerships among the Alliance members or external stakeholders; and

(2) Any policies or programs that the Alliance has endorsed, undertaken, or considered.

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## The U.S. Climate Alliance Members

<b>Arizona</b>	<b>California</b>	<b>Colorado</b>
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>Delaware</b>	<b>Guam</b>
<b>Hawai'i</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>Maine</b>
<b>Maryland</b>	<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>Michigan</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>New Mexico</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>Oregon</b>
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>Puerto Rico</b>	<b>Rhode Island</b>
<b>Vermont</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>

# List of Acronyms

<b>5MT</b>	5 Million Trees Initiative
<b>ARWG</b>	Adaptation and Resiliency Working Group
<b>BEPS</b>	Building Energy Performance Standards
<b>CCAP</b>	Comprehensive Climate Action Plan
<b>CGS</b>	Center for Global Sustainability
<b>CHS</b>	Clean Heat Standard
<b>CIPs</b>	Climate Implementation Plans
<b>COP29</b>	29th Conference of Parties (2024 United Nations Climate Conference)
<b>CPRG</b>	Climate Pollution Reduction Grants
<b>CPRP</b>	Climate Pollution Reduction Plan
<b>CSNA</b>	Climate Solutions Now Act
<b>DSCI</b>	Department of Service and Civic Innovation
<b>ECO</b>	Education, Communication, and Outreach Working Group
<b>EIRWG</b>	Energy Industry Revitalization Working Group
<b>EO</b>	Executive Order
<b>EREWG</b>	Energy Resilience and Efficiency Working Group
<b>EV</b>	Electric Vehicle
<b>EVSE</b>	Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment
<b>FY25</b>	Fiscal Year 25
<b>GGRA</b>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>HVAC</b>	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
<b>IIJA</b>	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
<b>IRA</b>	Inflation Reduction Act
<b>JTWG</b>	Just Transition Employment and Retraining Working Group
<b>MCCC</b>	Maryland Commission on Climate Change
<b>MDE</b>	Maryland Department of the Environment
<b>MEA</b>	Maryland Energy Agency
<b>MWG</b>	Mitigation Working Group
<b>NREL</b>	National Renewable Energy Laboratory
<b>PVWG</b>	Photovoltaic Systems Recovery, Reuse and Recycling Working Group
<b>RGGI</b>	Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative
<b>SCALE</b>	Subnational Climate Action Leaders' Exchange
<b>SERVE</b>	Serving Every Region Through Vocational Exploration
<b>SMAC</b>	Subnational Methane Action Coalition
<b>STWG</b>	Scientific and Technical Working Group
<b>ZEHES</b>	Zero-Emissions Heating Equipment Standard
<b>ZERB</b>	Zero Emissions and Resilient Buildings
<b>ZEV</b>	Zero-Emission Vehicle

# Executive Summary

Maryland's continued participation in the U.S. Climate Alliance ("the Alliance") in 2024 exemplifies its commitment to and leadership in aggressive climate action. Aligning with the Alliance's principles, Maryland has advanced policies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, reported progress at global forums, and accelerated initiatives to promote clean energy, sustainability, and equitable economic growth. The key takeaways from this report are:

1. **GHG Emissions:** Maryland achieved a 30% reduction in GHG emissions based on a 2006 baseline, according to a new accounting methodology introduced by the Climate Solutions Now Act (CSNA) of 2022.
2. **Global and National Leadership:** Maryland joined other Alliance states at COP29 in Baku and Climate Week NYC to showcase its climate leadership.
3. **Whole-of-Government Climate Action:** Governor Wes Moore's Executive Order on Climate Implementation Plans (CIPs) required the integration of climate strategies across all state agencies, ensuring alignment with the Climate Pollution Reduction Plan (CPRP).
4. **Equity and Workforce Development:** With several key appointments and executive actions, Maryland centers equity and workforce development in its climate strategies, in line with the Alliance announcement on building a "climate-ready workforce."
5. **Sector-Specific Actions:** In 2024, Maryland accelerated its efforts to reduce emissions and promote sustainability in key sectors:
  - a. **Building Decarbonization:** Initiatives focused on energy efficiency, electrification, and green building standards.
  - b. **Transportation:** Investments in clean transportation infrastructure, including the expansion of electric vehicle (EV) networks.
  - c. **Natural and Working Lands:** Policies promoting carbon sequestration and resilience in forests, wetlands, and agricultural lands.
6. **Funding Updates:** Maryland received several key grants from the Alliance for technical assistance on key sector-specific policies and staff development.

Maryland has many opportunities for continued leadership in 2025. With strategic investments, regional collaboration, and commitment to strategic collaboration with other Alliance states, Maryland can serve as a national model for climate resilience and leadership. Through its membership in the Alliance in 2024, Maryland demonstrated the value of state-level initiatives in driving emissions reductions, fostering economic growth, and promoting an equitable and sustainable future for all.

# The U.S. Climate Alliance

## Principles and Commitments

Alliance members recognize that climate change presents a serious threat to the environment and our residents, communities, and economy. State-level climate action is benefiting our nation, and Alliance members are growing our clean energy economies and creating new jobs, while reducing air pollution, improving public health, and building more resilient communities. Alliance members remain committed to supporting the responsibilities outlined in the international Paris Agreement and continue to pursue aggressive climate action to make progress toward its goals.

Alliance members hold firm in their commitment to provide the climate leadership the country needs to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and keep temperature increases below 1.5 degrees Celsius. Since its founding, Alliance members have collectively fought deregulation, supported the reinstatement of federal environmental safeguards, and adopted innovative climate policies across all sectors. These policies and programs provide a strong foundation to make their communities cleaner and more resilient.

Each Alliance member commits to,

1. Implement policies that advance the goals of the Paris Agreement, aiming to reduce GHG emissions by at least 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2025,
2. Track and report progress to the global community in appropriate settings, including when the world convenes to take stock of the Paris Agreement, and
3. Accelerate new and existing policies to reduce carbon pollution and promote clean energy deployment at state and federal levels.<sup>1</sup>

## U.S. Climate Alliance Progress in 2024

Each year, the Alliance publishes an annual report outlining collective progress. The 2024 annual report shows that Alliance states achieved an impressive 19% reduction in collective net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions between 2005 and 2022, continuing the coalition's sustained trend of declining emissions over a 16-year period. However, reflecting broader national patterns, Alliance members experienced a slight increase in collective GHG emissions in 2022 compared to 2021 as the U.S. economy recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>2</sup>

Presently, the Alliance is on track to achieve its short-term goal of a 26% reduction in collective emissions by 2025 from 2005 levels.<sup>3</sup> Achieving its ambitious goals of 50-52% reductions by

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<sup>1</sup> [U.S. Climate Alliance](#)

<sup>2</sup> [No Turning Back: United States Climate Alliance 2024 Annual Report](#)

<sup>3</sup> [No Turning Back: United States Climate Alliance 2024 Annual Report](#)

2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050 will depend on the alignment of key priorities. These include continued investments in clean energy manufacturing, advanced building standards, grid modernization, and nature- and community-based climate solutions. Following the 2024 election, Alliance co-chairs Kathy Hochul (NY) and Michelle Lujan Grisham (NM) reaffirmed the coalition's steadfast commitment to climate progress, declaring, "No matter the obstacles, our commitment will not waver, and our progress will not be stopped."<sup>4</sup>

## Maryland's Progress

As a national leader on climate change, Maryland leads by example with its clean air standards and GHG goals. Maryland has found the Alliance's coordination helpful and encouraging as it advances multi-state actions and regional partnerships. Secretary McIlwain, Governor Moore's Chief Sustainability Officer, Meghan Conklin, and Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) staff lead Alliance engagement on behalf of the Administration.

This report is designed to highlight the alignment between Maryland's climate leadership and shared Alliance principles and commitments, including 1) policies and progress that reduce GHG emissions, 2) reporting progress to the global community, and 3) accelerating new and existing policies to reduce carbon pollution and promote clean energy deployment at state and federal levels. This report also highlights Alliance initiatives and technical assistance funding that Maryland has benefited from over the past year.

### Maryland's Progress on Reducing GHG Emissions

Maryland not only met but exceeded its 25% GHG reduction goal for 2020, achieving a 30% reduction based on a 2006 baseline, according to a new accounting methodology introduced by the Climate Solutions Now Act (CSNA) of 2022. (Under the previous methodology, emissions were 33% lower than the 2006 baseline.) The CSNA established new GHG reduction goals for the state, requiring a 60% reduction by 2031 and net zero emissions by 2045, which overrides the old 2030 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act (GGRA) Plan to achieve a 44% reduction by 2031.<sup>5</sup>

### The Climate Pollution Reduction Plan (Dec 2023)

Published in December 2023, Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan (CPRP) provides a detailed roadmap for achieving Maryland's climate goals of reducing GHG emissions by 60% from 2006 levels by 2031 and ultimately achieving net zero emissions by 2045. The CPRP identifies the sector-specific GHG reductions and the benefits of those reductions, such as

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<sup>4</sup> [U.S. Climate Alliance Co-Chairs, Govs. Hochul and Lujan Grisham, Issue Statements on Presidential Election](#)

<sup>5</sup> This adjustment accounts for the CSNA's shift to using a 20-year GHG global warming potential (GWP), a measurement that compares the global warming impacts of different gasses, which amplifies the near-term climate impact of methane and other short-lived pollutants.

improved air quality, job creation, increased income, and health benefits. If fully implemented<sup>6</sup>, the Plan will create:

- 27,400 additional jobs,
- \$2.5 billion in increased personal income
- A net gain of \$5.3 billion in Maryland's gross domestic product (by 2031).

New policies recommended by the CPRP will transition Maryland from the fossil fuel era of the past to a clean energy future. Citizens will benefit from cleaner air, improved public health, lower energy costs, and more jobs with higher wages. Average households will save up to \$4,000 annually on energy costs. Air quality and public health outcomes will improve for everyone, especially those in historically underserved and overburdened communities. The CPRP serves as a roadmap for Maryland to meet its mandated statewide emissions targets beyond its commitments to the Alliance and set an example for state policy beyond 2025. The CPRP includes policies to achieve Maryland's GHG emissions requirements and calls for additional investments to ensure that no one is left behind in the transition to a clean energy economy.

## Maryland and the Global Community

### Maryland at COP29

In 2024, Secretary Mcllwain supported several Alliance activities alongside other member states at COP29 in Baku. The Secretary's presence reaffirmed Maryland's sustained commitment to working with the global community to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement at a series of events and meetings, including several convenings hosted by the Alliance. At the Global Climate Action High-Level Event, she emphasized Maryland's commitment to achieving the state's climate and clean energy goals under Governor Moore's leadership and highlighted the dual benefits of this goal: significant emissions reductions and economic development.

Secretary Mcllwain also participated in a range of panels and events, including an Alliance-sponsored panel called "Trailblazers, Changemakers, and Innovators: Women Climate Leaders."<sup>7</sup> Now in its third year, the panel brought together influential women from the Alliance and America Is All In to share their perspectives on addressing climate challenges. The Secretary and other panelists discussed their experiences as leaders in the climate and energy sectors, the unique challenges they face in their roles, and the innovative strategies they are employing to drive change. The discussion emphasized the importance of inclusive leadership and collaboration in achieving global climate goals.

Additionally, Maryland announced its participation in the new Zero Emissions and Resilient Buildings (ZERB) Accelerator through the Subnational Climate Action Leaders' Exchange

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<sup>6</sup> Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan, Chapter 3: Economic and Public Health Impacts, and Chapter 4: Lower Energy Costs and More Jobs, include additional detail on the specific benefits of implementing the plan and transitioning the state to clean energy for all.

<sup>7</sup> [Trailblazers, Changemakers, and Innovators: Women Climate Leaders](#)

(SCALE) partnership. Maryland, alongside Washington State and Bogotá, Colombia, will be among the first three subnational jurisdictions to join this accelerator.<sup>8</sup> The accelerator focuses on advancing critical mitigation and resilience initiatives in the buildings sector, a key policy priority area for the Alliance and overall GHG reductions. Maryland's leadership in this effort underscores its commitment to developing innovative solutions that support sustainable and resilient communities.

Maryland also became the latest member of the Subnational Methane Action Coalition (SMAC).<sup>9</sup> The coalition, spearheaded by California, includes subnational jurisdictions from Brazil, Canada, South Korea, Bolivia, Germany, Spain, and the United States. Methane, which accounts for over 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions and is over 80 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> over a 20-year period, must remain a key component of Maryland's climate strategy.<sup>10</sup> Coalition members pledge to exceed the Global Methane Pledge goal of a 30% reduction in methane emissions from 2020 levels by 2030, underscoring Maryland's commitment to bold climate action.



*From left to right: Marcene Mitchell, WWF Senior Vice President of Climate Change; Taryn Finnessey, Managing Director of the U.S. Climate Alliance; Serena McIlwain, Maryland Secretary of the Environment; Melisa Logan, Mayor of Blytheville, Arkansas; and Michelle Patron, Microsoft General Manager of Sustainability Policy, participate in the "Trailblazers, Changemakers, and Innovators: Women Climate Leaders" panel at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, on November 16, 2024. Photo credit: U.S. Climate Alliance.*

## Maryland at 2024 Climate Week NYC

Hosted by the international non-profit organization Climate Group, Climate Week NYC convenes change makers from government, the private sector, and civil society from all over the world to facilitate progress on global climate action and champion change that is already happening.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> [Zero Emissions and Resilient Buildings \(ZERB\) Accelerator Launched at COP 29](#)

<sup>9</sup> <https://x.com/MDEnvironment/status/1857411942505136377>

<sup>10</sup> [Subnational Methane Action Coalition](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Climate Week](#)

Representing Maryland in this distinguished group, Secretary Mcllwain participated in high-level panels and large-scale meetings with global leaders, fostering collaboration and exchanging ideas. Her one-on-one meetings with Governor Ntuli of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and Quebec's Minister of the Environment, Benoit Charette, highlighted the importance of international partnerships in tackling climate challenges.

Of note, Maryland participated in the Alliance's announcement of the Governors' Climate-Ready Workforce Initiative. This effort aligns with historic federal investments from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and CHIPS and Science Act to expand workforce training pathways for a climate-ready workforce. As a member of the Initiative, Maryland's goals include creating equitable pathways to good-paying green jobs, fostering cross-sector collaboration, supporting innovative workforce development, maximizing federal investments, and advancing data-driven planning. Through the Initiative, Maryland and other Alliance members will also support a goal of 1 million new workers in Registered Apprenticeship programs by 2035. Cohorts to be launched in the Initiative's first year include the following focus areas: 1) Clean Energy, Fuels, and Technologies, 2) Clean Buildings and Industry, and 3) Resilient Communities and Lands.



## Maryland is Accelerating Policies to Reduce Pollution, Promote Clean Energy, and Create Jobs

*Secretary of the Environment Serena Mcllwain speaks at a panel on "Capital for change: tackling accessibility in climate funding" in New York at Climate Week on September 25, 2024. Photo credit: Rachel Lamb.*

## Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC)

As the independent body that advises the General Assembly and Governor's office on climate policy, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC) supports Maryland's mitigation and adaptation efforts that generally align with priority policy areas for the Alliance. Prior to this year, the MCCC consisted of four working groups: Adaptation and Resiliency Working Group (ARWG); Education, Communication, and Outreach Working Group (ECO); Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Working Group (MWG); and Scientific and Technical Working Group (STWG).

In 2024, the MCCC created and staffed four new working groups as outlined and required by the CSNA.

- **Just Transition Employment and Retraining Working Group (JTWG):** Focuses on transitioning fossil fuel workers to clean energy jobs.
- **Energy Industry Revitalization Working Group (EIRWG):** Focuses on impacts to small businesses and potential facility closures due to climate policies.
- **Energy Resilience and Efficiency Working Group (EREWG):** Focuses on energy infrastructure improvements, transmission efficiency, and battery backups.
- **Solar Photovoltaic Systems Recovery, Reuse and Recycling Working Group (PVWG):** Focuses on options for recycling or reusing solar panels.

Each of the four new working groups had an associated study they had to support, aligning with their specific focus areas. The EREWG, EIRWG, and PVWG reports are expected before the end of the year. The Center for Global Sustainability (CGS) at the University of Maryland directly oversaw EIRWG and PVWG and subcontracted EREWG to Johns Hopkins University. The JTWG study is anticipated at the beginning of 2025 and is supported by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). In addition to these studies, the MCCC will publish its annual report in December. This comprehensive document will include an update on the latest climate science and recommendations from all eight working groups and commissioners, offering a roadmap for advancing climate policies that align with the Alliance's key policy priority areas.<sup>12</sup>

## A Whole-of-Government Approach

The Moore-Miller Administration recognizes that the government must work together to be an effective partner in the fight against climate change. This must be reflected in staffing decisions and plans that leverage the unique strengths and areas of expertise of each department and agency. Here are the steps Maryland took in 2024 to underscore this whole-of-government approach.

**Climate Implementation Plans (CIPs):** On June 4, 2024, Governor Wes Moore signed Executive

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<sup>12</sup> [Policy Priorities](#)

Order (EO) 01.01.2024.19. It calls for a whole-of-government approach and requires 25 departments and agencies within the Executive Branch to submit a Climate Implementation Plan (CIP) to the Governor by November 1, 2024. These plans guarantee that each agency, particularly those working with disproportionately impacted communities, has a blueprint to work with MDE to advance climate action with a clear and integrated approach. Moving forward, MDE will support agencies throughout the year to track progress on their CIPs and submit annual progress reports to the Governor. This unparalleled executive measure asks agencies to identify actions and resources necessary to implement Maryland's CPRP, including their top priorities for the upcoming year, funding needs, and potential investment outcomes in future years. The EO also establishes a Governor's Subcabinet on Climate chaired by the Secretary of MDE.

**"It is bold, it is ambitious; In Maryland we're going to get it done, because that's what we do," - Governor Wes Moore at the Executive Order signing at Henderson-Hopkins School in East Baltimore, June 4, 2024.**

### Creating Green Jobs

The Moore-Miller Administration understands that climate change and economic development are intertwined. Any climate strategy must include ways to increase employment and development opportunities for green jobs. Maryland and the Alliance's future is contingent on a just transition and inclusive workforce development. In that spirit, Maryland continued its progress in 2024 toward a future of green employment.

**Blink Charging Moves to Maryland:** In March 2024, Blink Charging announced that it was moving its global headquarters to a 15,000-square-foot facility in Bowie, Maryland. With over 5,000 public charging stations, Blink ranks as the third-largest vertically integrated EV charging company in the United States. The move aligns with Maryland's clean energy goals and adheres to "Buy American" requirements, with support from a \$1 million state loan and county incentives. Maryland's partnership with Blink exemplifies a strong alignment with the Alliance's priorities of net-zero industrial policy and clean transportation.

**Offshore Wind:** Maryland currently has two major offshore wind projects underway. Together, these projects highlight Maryland's growing role in the industry while fostering substantial job creation and advancing the state's clean energy goals.

- **MarWin** – Located 18 miles off Maryland's coast, MarWin will generate 248 MW of energy, powering 75,000 homes. Scheduled for completion in 2024 and operation by 2026, MarWin is expected to create 1,298 direct jobs during development and construction and 2,282 jobs during its operational period.
- **Momentum Wind** – Situated 15 miles off the coast, Momentum Wind will produce 808.5

MW of energy, enough to power 210,000 homes. Set for completion in 2026, it is projected to create nearly 7,000 direct jobs during its development and construction phase and 254 jobs during operations.

The trajectory of these projects depends on the availability of financial resources, regulatory backing, and community support. However, Maryland remains steadfast in its commitment to offshore wind as essential for its emissions targets and prosperity.

**Maryland Corps/Service Year Option:** The Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI), established in 2023, is guiding young people in Maryland toward climate careers. The Maryland Corps/Service Year Option is a critical step in fostering the next generation of a climate-ready workforce in Maryland. The program offers a year of professional growth and career exploration with a living wage across several sectors. It is also a necessary template for Maryland to expand its just transition efforts alongside other Alliance members among vulnerable and overburdened populations. This includes the collective commitment to support 1 million new workers through Registered Apprenticeship programs. Through the Maryland Corps/Service Year Option program, MDE is hosting two recent high school graduates for a year-long professional development experience in the climate space.



*Governor Wes Moore greets Paul Cruz, an MDE-hosted Climate Corps member from the Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI) on stage at the launch of the second Maryland Corps and Service Year Option cohort at the University of Maryland on September 11, 2024. Photo credit: Office of Governor Wes Moore.*

## Centering Equity and Environmental Justice

Key appointments and actions taken this year prove Maryland's commitment to equity and justice in its climate strategies. The state's efforts align closely with the Alliance's emphasis on prioritizing equity and a just transition in addressing climate change. These developments showcase Maryland's dedication to ensuring that its initiatives are both climate-forward, and inclusive and fair to all communities.

**Aneca Y. Atkinson appointed as Assistant Secretary of Environmental Justice:** In January 2024, Secretary McIlwain announced the historic appointment of Aneca Y. Atkinson as Maryland's first Assistant Secretary for Environmental Justice. Assistant Secretary Atkinson, formerly with the National Audubon Society and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, brings extensive experience in environmental policy, conservation, and public engagement, focusing on equity and inclusion. In her newly created role, she is committed to addressing environmental disparities, amplifying marginalized voices, and ensuring a cleaner, greener Maryland for communities disproportionately affected by pollution and climate change.

**Just Transition Employment and Retraining Working Group (JTWG):** Maryland launched the Just Transition Employment and Retraining Working Group (JTWG), which will serve to advise the Maryland Climate Change Commission on equitable workforce development and training, including in transportation, natural working lands, renewable energy, and other clean energy technologies. In 2024, the JTWG reviewed recently passed laws relating to energy efficiency and networked geothermal, alongside workforce need considerations.

## Actions by Sector

### Building Decarbonization

**Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS):** The CSNA directed the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to adopt Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS). BEPS requires building owners who own buildings larger than 35,000 square feet to annually report energy use data to MDE starting June 1st, 2025 and meet phased emissions standards starting in 2030, ultimately reaching net zero in 2040.<sup>13</sup> Efficiently meeting these standards is projected to save building owners money, reduce peak demand, and promote healthier air quality for Marylanders. BEPS has seen extensive stakeholder engagement over the last two years. In 2024, MDE engaged with over 2,500 stakeholders in more than 50 virtual and in-person events, including 14 public working group sessions, and held three public comment periods and two public hearings. MDE concluded the most recent public comment period in October and is reviewing comments received.

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<sup>13</sup> [Building Energy Performance Standards](#)

**Clean Heat Rules:** MDE is developing a Clean Heat Standard (CHS) and Zero-Emissions Heating Equipment Standard (ZEHES), collectively known as the Clean Heat Rules,<sup>14</sup> which will improve public health and lower energy costs for residents and businesses. The Clean Heat Rules will support the transition to efficient solutions, such as heat pumps, and other clean heating and cooling appliances. As part of this process, MDE has begun outreach on the Clean Heat Rules to stakeholders including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) contractors, fuel distributors, and environmental justice organizations. Maryland's Clean Heat Rules aligns with the example of other Alliance members who have recognized the importance of clean heat sources for reducing building sector emissions.

Maryland continues to be a national leader in the building decarbonization space with both BEPS and Clean Heat Rules. It leads by example for Alliance members and is moving the building sector toward net zero.

## Transportation

**Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Rebate Program:** Earlier this year, the Maryland Energy Agency (MEA) introduced the Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Rebate Program for the fiscal year 2025. This initiative encourages the adoption of EVs by reducing the financial burden of installing charging infrastructure. Under the program, residential customers are eligible to receive rebates of up to \$700 to offset the costs of installing EV charging equipment at their homes. Commercial customers can qualify for rebates of up to \$5,000, making installing EV charging stations at businesses, workplaces, or public facilities more affordable.

**Medium-Duty and Heavy-Duty Zero-Emission (MHD) Vehicle Grant Program:** MEA is offering grants to Maryland fleet companies, organizations, and communities to help defray the costs of purchasing qualified, newly manufactured zero-emission medium-duty or heavy-duty zero-emission fleet vehicles and qualified heavy equipment property. \$6.5 million is currently available for the program; grants cover up to 75% of the cost of eligible vehicles and equipment up to \$1.5 million per project.

The EVSE Rebate and MHD Vehicle Grant programs aim to address financial barriers to electric vehicle adoption and charger installation. This is a critical step in advancing the state's and the Alliance's shared priorities for reducing GHG emissions from the transportation sector.

## Natural and Working Lands

**5 Million Trees:** The 5 Million Trees Initiative (5MT) charges the State to plant and maintain 5 million native trees by 2031, with 500,000 in urban, underserved areas defined by the CSNA<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> [Clean Heat Rules](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Maryland Rolls Out '5 Million Trees' Initiative](#)

Trees registered towards 5MT contribute to the State’s GHG inventory by increasing the State’s forest carbon sink and enhancing its capacity to offset emissions. In addition to supporting the State’s carbon mitigation targets, strategic tree planting enables historically underserved communities to benefit from improved air and water quality and reduced urban heat island effects. 5MT mirrors the policies of several other Alliance states undertaking nature-based solutions as a step towards reaching its emissions targets.

## Funding Updates and Looking Ahead

The Alliance made available several technical assistance and staff capacity grants to help Maryland make progress on meeting its climate goals. Under the Climate Leadership Grant Program (CLGP), Maryland received a grant to hire a new climate policy staffer, Lydia McPherson, in the Governor’s Office to accelerate progress on the Administration’s major climate priorities. Maryland also benefited from \$750,000 in technical assistance from the Alliance to advance policies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the building sector, advance just transition and retraining, accelerate buy clean policies, build the Climate Corps program, and accelerate the transition to 100% clean energy by 2035. This access to resources and best-practices sharing will continue to be important into 2025 and beyond.

Maryland joins other states in the Alliance in its collective pledge to “not turn back” on climate ambition.<sup>16</sup> In the face of potential funding gaps or regulatory uncertainties that could arise from changes at the federal level, Maryland will continue to collaborate with neighboring states and private sector partners whenever possible to ensure a coordinated approach to achieving our shared climate goals.

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<sup>16</sup> [“We Will Not Waver...We Will Not Turn Back”](#)