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PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Calls on Congress to Prioritize Funding for Programs to Address the Climate Crisis, Environmental Injustice *Coalition of Attorneys General Urges Inclusion of Clean Energy, Air, Water, and Climate Change Initiatives in Reconciliation Bill*

BALTIMORE, MD (September 14, 2021) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today joined a coalition of 20 state attorneys general in urging Congress to respond to the climate crisis and advance environmental justice by funding critical programs in budget reconciliation legislation. In a [letter to Democratic Congressional leaders](#), the coalition calls on Congress to pass infrastructure legislation and to allocate funding in the upcoming reconciliation bill that addresses the rapid transition to a clean energy economy, climate change, and the environmental injustices faced by low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal and indigenous communities. The coalition urges Congress to fund actions that will substantially cut greenhouse gases – thereby preventing more dire climate change harms – and confront longstanding environmental injustice.

“Immediate and decisive action is needed to mitigate disproportionate environmental and public health harms caused by the climate crisis,” said Attorney General Frosh. “We are calling on Congress to swiftly enact clean energy legislation in the interest of environmental justice, and a better future for all Americans.”

All Americans deserve an equal right to clean air, clean water, and a safe and healthy environment. However, low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal and indigenous communities are too often denied these rights, enduring disproportionate burdens of pollution, climate change, or other serious health and environmental harms. Those harms are only becoming more severe, as witnessed by the catastrophic storms and wildfires experienced this summer. The coalition argues that Congress should address the climate emergency by prioritizing investment in the following specific areas that – while broadly beneficial to improving the lives of all Americans – are critical steps in ending the legacy of inequity that afflicts marginalized and underserved communities:

- Ensure substantial additional funding to reduce climate change pollution at its source and foster climate resilience;
- Improve critical quality water and drinking water services, including providing adequate funding to ensure that all lead service lines are replaced;
- Invest in air quality monitoring in at-risk communities;
- Address methane pollution;

- Increase access to and investment in clean energy, including enacting the proposed Clean Energy Payment Program;
- Fund energy efficiency programs for schools and affordable housing;
- Accelerate the electrification of transportation and goods movement; and
- Support programs that advance workforce development and pollution reduction and improve the health of our communities.

Additionally, the coalition contends that in order for the Biden administration to deliver on its Justice40 promise, Congress must ensure that 40 percent of improvements funded by the budget reconciliation bill benefit disadvantaged communities.

Joining Attorney General Frosh in sending today's letter are the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2021/091421.pdf>