

Draft By Laws – June 20th, 2016

Maryland Climate Change Commission

Commission Details

The Maryland Climate Change Commission is a 26 member body created by 2015 SB 258/HB 514. This law codified an Executive Order issued in 2014. The “new” Commission membership will be appointed by June 1, 2016 and must meet before July 1, 2016.

There are four full Commission meetings planned for 2016. These meetings will take place at Department of the Environment Headquarters at Montgomery Park from 12:30p to 2:30p unless otherwise designated.

Monday, April 18th
Monday, June 20th
Monday, September 19th
Wednesday, October 26th 1 to 3p at DNR (if needed)
Wednesday, November 9th

Commission Membership

- A member of the State Senate and the MD House of Delegates
- The Secretaries of the Departments of the Environment, Agriculture, Natural Resources, Planning, Transportation, and General Services
- The State Treasurer
- The State Superintendent
- The Director of MEA
- The President of UMCES
- The Chair of the Critical Areas Commission
- The President of the MD Farm Bureau
- The Maryland Associations of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League each appoint a member
- The Senate President and the Speaker of the House each appoint members to represent the following communities: Business, Nonprofit organizations, Organized labor (one related to the building trade and one related to manufacturing), Philanthropic organizations
- The Governor appoints a climate change expert and a public health expert, each from a Maryland University

The Secretary of the Environment serves as the Chair of the Commission. Two co-chairs have been appointed to assist in the leadership of the MCCC. Additionally, a Steering Committee appointed by the Chair meets monthly to plan and define the work of the Commission. Steering Committee decisions are made by consensus.

Working Groups

The Commission has four working groups: Adaptation & Response, Education, Communication, & Outreach, Mitigation, and Scientific & Technology. These working groups are required to develop work plans that are updated annually. There are Chairs of these working groups that set the meeting schedule and meeting agendas. Working group Chairs, members, and technical advisors are named by the Chair of the MCCC with advising from staff and commissioners. Every effort is made to have a balance of stakeholder perspectives represented on the working groups.

Information flows from the working groups to the Steering Committee for approval. Chairs for the working groups report to the Steering Committee and then to the full Commission. Working group Chairs give reports at each Steering Committee meeting and in turn share information from other working groups with their own membership.

Commission's Charge

The Commission is required to report to the Governor and the legislature annually. The state agencies are required to review, plans, regulations, and fiscal programs to identify and recommend opportunities to fully integrate climate change considerations into state government.

The Commission should also address the following:

- Strengthen the Climate Change Action Plan
- Develop private-public partnerships with local, State, and federal government
- Communicate and educate citizens about the urgency of acting to reduce the impact of climate change
- Conduct an inventory of GHG emission sources
- Address the impacts of climate change on low income and vulnerable communities
- Assess impacts that climate change may have on the State's economy, as well as, specific sectors such as agriculture
- Develop strategies for adaptation and mitigation

Responsibilities

Commission members are expected to attend the full Commission meetings and to participate in any working groups to which they were appointed. Commissioners are welcome to attend any working group that is of interest; however, they may not vote on a decision making vote unless the member has been appointed to the working group. All meetings of the full Commission and working groups are public meetings and operate under the Open Meetings Act. Every effort is made to share information about meeting dates, agendas, and supporting information well in advance of the meeting. Although it is necessary to work on Commission related items between meetings, typically less than an hour per week of time is necessary.

State agency staff that attends working group or full Commission meetings are expected to relay relevant information to the appropriate staff at the agency.

Voting Procedures (Proposed Language with Choice for new MCCC)

The Commission's process is consensus driven and all efforts should be made to reach consensus on a particular issue before a voting process is used. For the purposes of the Commission Report, consensus equates to being okay with the language in the Report. If a vote is necessary, voting rights are limited to Commission members only. Commissioners may vote by phone or designate a proxy. A proxy must be named in email prior to the start of the meeting.

Any Commission member has the right to make a motion for a vote. The Commission may vote if a quorum of members is present. This means:

- (1) Fourteen members of the Commission are a quorum.
- (2) Except as provided in item 3, the affirmative vote of a majority of Commission members present at a meeting having a quorum is required for the Commission to take any action.

(3) An affirmative vote of at least 14 members is needed to support the Commission Report or a recommendation contained in the report.

Or (two-thirds majority option)

(3) An affirmative vote of at least 18 members is needed to support the Commission Report or a recommendation contained in the report.

A minority report created by dissenting members will be welcomed and included during any formal vote.

Public Comment

The Commission is committed to assuring public participation and stakeholder involvement in all the Commission's activities through numerous programs that encourage public participation and public responsibility in order to achieve Maryland's public health and environmental protection goals. Please send an email to climate.change@maryland.gov with your comments or recommendations.