

Governor O'Malley issues Executive Order to expand Commission on Climate Change

Written by Governor's Office
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ANNAPOLIS, MD (November 19, 2014) – Building on the O'Malley-Brown Administration's efforts to address the effects of climate change, Governor Martin O'Malley today issued an executive order that expands the membership (list attached), mission and work of the [Maryland Commission on Climate Change](#)

The Executive Order states that more must be done to achieve the State's goal to [reduce greenhouse gas emissions](#) in Maryland and prepare State and local governments as well as residents for the likely health, environmental and socioeconomic effects of climate change. The requirements of the Executive Order include an expansion of the Commission membership and the development of a plan to achieve an 80 percent, science-based reduction in Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2050.

"Climate change is real, and Maryland is vulnerable. But we can make a difference through our actions and doing what works," said **Governor O'Malley**. "It is critical that we move forward and continue to lead by example in addressing an issue threatening the Chesapeake Bay and our way of life. This expansion of the Commission on Climate Change's membership and mission will help to further energize this effort."

"It's an honor to be given the opportunity to work with Maryland's leaders on securing the state's growth and vitality in the face of challenges from climate change," said **Sue Briggum, Vice President, Waste Management, Inc**

. "The Governor's Executive Order sets the framework for business, environmental and community groups and government to work together to envision a concrete plan and means to measure progress toward a safer and cleaner environment. Business can provide pragmatic perspectives on how the Governor's vision can be realized throughout state programs."

"This new Executive Order will expand the scope and enhance the effectiveness of the steps already undertaken by the O'Malley Brown Administration to reduce our state's greenhouse gas emissions and increase our ability to deal with the negative impacts of climate change," said **Stuart Clarke, Executive Director, Town Creek Foundation**

. "The result will be a Maryland that is cleaner, healthier, and more resilient in the face of the climate challenges and disruptions of the future."

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The Executive Order makes reference to the March 2014 United States Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which reported that the effects of climate change are occurring on all continents and across the oceans, and that numerous opportunities exist to respond to and mitigate associated risks. It also notes that effects already experienced by Maryland include sea level rise of more than one foot in the last century, increasing water temperatures in the Chesapeake Bay and more rain and flooding in the winter and spring and less in the summer.

Maryland's people and their property, natural environment and public investments are extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts that include sea level rise, increased storm intensity, extreme droughts and heat waves and increased wind and rainfall. A new survey from George Mason University in partnership with the Climate Communication Consortium of Maryland shows that eight out of 10 Marylanders feel that addressing climate change should be a priority for Maryland's Governor and General Assembly.

Under the leadership of the O'Malley-Brown Administration Maryland has taken actions that demonstrate the State's strong commitment to addressing the causes and consequences of climate change. In 2007, Governor O'Malley established Maryland's first [Commission on Climate Change](#) to develop an action plan to address the drivers of climate change, to prepare for its likely impacts in the State and to establish goals and timetables for implementation.

[Maryland Commission on Climate Change](#)

. The Commission, made up of 16 State agency heads and six members of the General Assembly, was charged with the development of a Plan of Action to address the drivers of climate change, to prepare for its likely impacts in Maryland and to establish goals and timetables for implementation. The Commission released the

[Maryland Climate Action Plan](#)

in 2008.

Other key steps taken by Maryland to address climate change include:

- Passage in 2007 of the [Clean Cars Act](#) .
- Participation beginning in 2007 in the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative](#) .
- Amendments to the [Critical Area Act](#) and passage of the [Living Shorelines Protection Act](#) in 2008.
- Passage in 2008 of the [EmPOWER Maryland Energy Efficiency Act](#) .
- Passage in 2009 of the [Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act](#) .
- Issuance in 2013 of the [Executive Order on Climate Change and "Coast Smart" Construction](#) .
- Passage in 2013 of the [Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act](#) .

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- Passage in 2013 of the [Transportation Infrastructure Investment Act](#) .
- Final issuance in 2013 of Maryland's [Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan](#) .
- Launch in 2013 of [State Zero-Emission Vehicles Programs](#) .
- Passage in 2014 of the [Coast Smart Council](#) and Bay Acidification Task Force Legislation.

To view the full executive order, click here: <http://climatechange.maryland.gov/publications/executive-order-01.01.2014.14-strengthening-climate-action-in-maryland/>.