

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
c/o Department of Environmental Services
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 705, Arlington, VA 22201

August 3, 2022

The Honorable Katie Cristol
Chair Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

**Re: C2E2 Input on Arlington's 2023 Climate Change, Energy and Environmental
Legislative Priorities**

Dear Chair Cristol:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on Arlington's priorities for the 2023 legislative session. As with this year's legislative session, Arlington's priorities for the upcoming 2023 General Assembly session must be to continue to defend the legislative gains made in 2020 and 2021 in addressing climate change and other environmental challenges. C2E2 commends the commitment of the County Board and staff and our legislative delegation to hold the line against retrenchment on the Virginia Clean Economy Act and Virginia's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and prevent diversion of RGGI funds from flooding mitigation and energy efficiency upgrades for low-income housing. Important County Board members and staff, in coordination with other jurisdictions, should participate in regulatory proceedings, particularly the SCC, to prevent efforts to undermine RGGI and the VCEA outside of the legislature.

Nevertheless, addressing the climate crisis is urgent, solutions are complex and increased state investments and greater local control to implement policies and regulations to advance goals within local conditions will be key to achieving Arlington's climate and environmental goals. Arlington County Board members and staff along with our legislative representatives should seek common cause with jurisdictions across the state and their representatives to pass incremental legislation and build coalitions to resume the recently lost momentum in advancing efforts to address these challenges as the political situation becomes more favorable. As addressed in greater detail in our previous legislative priorities letters, key C2E2 priorities remain:

- Strengthening building codes and granting jurisdictions the authority to adopt "stretch codes" and benchmarking to improve energy efficiency in buildings and pave the way for broad electrification of homes and businesses.
- Expanded funding to support electrification of transportation, including grant programs for electric schools and transit buses and rebate programs for electric vehicle purchases.
- Increasing competition in renewable energy markets and further advancing community solar projects, in light of recent efforts by a major utility company to undermine them.

- Funding and legislation to preserve and promote the growth of healthy, vibrant urban forests—including combating invasive plants in our natural areas—essential to the environment and quality of life by reducing heat island effects, improving water and air quality, reducing stormwater runoff, and combating climate change.
- Establishing or strengthening financial mechanisms, such as Green Banks and On-Bill Financing/On-Bill Repayment, to advance community investments in energy efficiency and infrastructure to address climate change.
- Measures to pave the way for Extended Producer Responsibility legislation and reduction in single-use plastics.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations. We are available to answer questions and provide additional information regarding any of these proposals.

Respectfully,



Joan McIntyre,

Chair Climate Change, Energy and Environment Commission

cc: Arlington County Board

Ilana Creinin, State Legislative Affairs Liaison