

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 17, 2025

The Honorable Lee M. Zeldin
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

We are deeply concerned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposal to eliminate the 2009 Endangerment Finding and what that will mean for Maryland and our constituents' health and safety.

The Endangerment Finding requires the EPA to protect people from the pollution that causes climate change. Denying the danger cannot change the facts: greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels are heating our planet and endangering us all.

The Endangerment Finding is based on settled science: decades of peer-reviewed scientific research have proven that rising global temperatures fuel stronger hurricanes, sea level rise, increased flooding, record-breaking heat waves, and other forms of extreme weather. The threats have never been more dire to communities across the country, including our constituents in Maryland.

Coastal communities in the Chesapeake Bay region are especially vulnerable to rising sea levels; in this region, seas have already risen one foot over the past century, twice as fast as the worldwide average, and are projected to rise nearly 3 more feet by 2100.¹ More than 100 Maryland communities are at risk of 'nuisance flooding' from sea level rise. Almost a third of those communities are socioeconomically disadvantaged and do not have the resources to adapt to or mitigate the local impacts. Annapolis and Baltimore are experiencing some of the most frequent nuisance flooding events in the country, which have increased more than 920 percent since 1960.² Further, Maryland farmers are expected to lose between \$39 million and \$107 million annually in crop yields due to saltwater intrusion.³

Dangerous flooding also threatens Maryland communities further inland as heavy precipitation and severe storms have become more common. As of August 1st, Maryland has already recorded the most flash flood warnings in 2025 since 2020.⁴ Two years after Ellicott City was hit by a 1-in-1000 year catastrophic flash flood in 2016, which took the lives of two Marylanders,⁵ damaged over 100 businesses and 107 homes costing over \$22 million in repairs,⁶ and reduced economic activity by \$67.2 million,⁷ another flash flood once again destroyed the city's Main Street and led to the death of one person.⁸ Recent flooding in the Mid-Atlantic led to the death of a child swept away by flood waters and over 200 children and students being evacuated from an elementary school in motorized boats in Western Maryland.⁹ The flood damaged drinking water

systems and roads, highlighting the dangers facing all Marylanders as extreme weather wreaks havoc on the state's infrastructure and local economies.¹⁰

As temperatures continue to rise, Marylanders, along with much of the rest of the nation, are threatened by heat waves of ever greater length and magnitude. Since 1900, average temperatures in Maryland have risen by roughly 2.5 °F.¹¹ During the 2024 heat season, there were 1,255 heat-related medical visits in Maryland – a 53% increase from the previous year – and 26 heat-related deaths.¹² During the ongoing 2025 heat season, one heat wave alone in late June caused 472 people to go to urgent care or the emergency room, and resulted in 7 tragic deaths.¹³ In 2025, Maryland has already had more heat deaths than in the past 13 years, having reached 29 lives lost in mid-August.¹⁴ A failure to seriously curtail greenhouse gas emissions will lead to hotter average temperatures and more frequent days in which the heat index crosses 105 °F, threatening to increase heat-related illness and death even further.

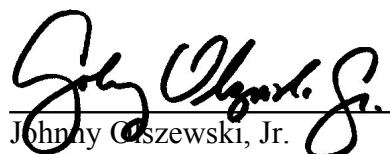
The EPA is tasked with protecting the public from air pollution that endangers health and welfare, and this politically motivated attempt to eliminate the Endangerment Finding flies in the face of that core mission. As you know, eliminating the Endangerment Finding will undermine other protections against climate pollution: clean car and truck standards, power plant rules, oil and gas rules, landfill rules, and more. This amounts to giving polluters a free pass to pollute at the expense of families in Maryland and across the country. It means our constituents will face more climate chaos and more pollution, more health harms, and higher costs – just so the corporations responsible for the climate crisis can continue to rake in record-breaking profit.

We urge you to put the welfare of people over that of polluters and maintain the Endangerment Finding. Marylanders and communities across the country should not be left to foot the bill for the climate chaos caused by polluters.

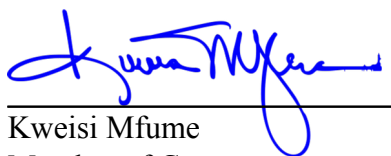
Sincerely,



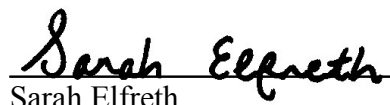
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



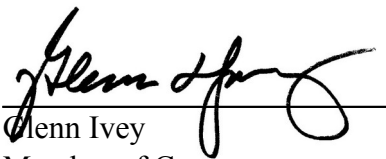
Johnny Ciszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



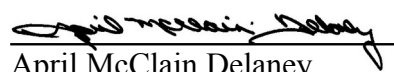
Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



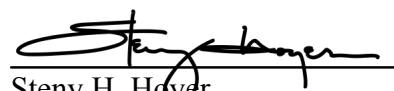
Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

- ¹ “Sea-Level Rise Projections for Maryland.” University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. 2023. <https://www.umces.edu/sea-level-rise-projections>
- ² “Sea Level Rise and Nuisance Flood Frequency Changes around the United States.” NOAA. 2014. https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/publications/NOAA_Technical_Report_NOS_COOPS_073.pdf
- ³ “The spread and cost of saltwater intrusion in the US Mid-Atlantic.” Mondal et al., 2023. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-023-01186-6>
- ⁴ “Maryland records most flash flood warnings since 2020. Here’s why.” August 1, 2025. <https://marylandmatters.org/2025/08/01/maryland-records-most-flash-flood-warnings-since-2020-heres-why/>
- ⁵ “Dramatic video shows major flooding in Ellicott City, Maryland.” May 27, 2018. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ellicott-city-maryland-flooding-today-2018-05-27-live-updates/>
- ⁶ “Damage estimate near \$22.4M after flooding in historic Ellicott City.” August 22, 2016. <https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/damage-estimate-near-22-4m-after-flooding-in-historic-ellicott-city/>
- ⁷ “The Economic Impact of the 2016 Ellicott City Flood.” Richard Clinch, The Jacob France Institute. <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/sites/default/files/2021-08/Ellicott%20City%20Flood%20Report%20Final.pdf>
- ⁸ “After pair of 1-in-1000 year floods, a town now seeks safeguards.” May 30, 2018. <https://apnews.com/article/2d6be646a2ba4391a1a24d96d3e1a640>
- ⁹ “12-year-old boy swept away by rushing water believed to be dead after flash flooding impacts Mid-Atlantic.” May 14, 2025. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/maryland-flooding-elementary-schools-evacuations/story?id=121773109>
- ¹⁰ “Flooding caused by atmospheric river over Maryland shows how climate change is stressing inland communities.” May 21, 2025. <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/21052025/maryland-atmospheric-river-flooding-climate-change-stressing-inland-communities/>
- ¹¹ “Maryland and the District of Columbia State Climate Summary 2022.” 2022. Jennifer Runkle, Kenneth E. Kunkel, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. <https://statesummaries.ncics.org/chapter/md/#:~:text=Temperatures%20in%20Maryland%20have%20risen,projected%20to%20be%20less%20intense.>
- ¹² “Maryland 2024 Heat-Related Illness Surveillance Summary Report.” November 13, 2024. <https://health.maryland.gov/preparedness/Documents/2024%20HeatRelated%20Illness%20Surveillance%20Summary%20Report.pdf>
- ¹³ “Hundreds went to emergency rooms, 7 died from heat-related illness in June heat wave.” July 8, 2025 <https://marylandmatters.org/2025/07/08/hundreds-landed-in-emergency-rooms-seven-died-from-heat-related-illness-during-june-heat-wave/?emci=762b7085-ee5b-f011-8f7c-6045bdfe8e9c&emdi=5addae87-f95b-f011-8f7c-6045bdfe8e9c&ceid=622399>
- ¹⁴ “Heat death toll climbs to 29, Maryland’s deadliest summer since 2012.” August 13, 2025 <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/community/local-news/maryland-deadly-summer-heat-death-2AORIEJVFFE5BKI6ZYY5MQSPME/>