Written Testimony for HB1543- Environment – Climate Crisis and Education Act (CCEA)

Submitted by Denisse Guitarra, Maryland Conservation Advocate, Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS)

Dear House Economic Matters Committee,

For 123 years, Audubon Naturalist Society has inspired people to enjoy, learn about and protect nature. We thank the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB1543- Environment – Climate Crisis and Education Act (CCEA).

Under today’s climate crisis, it is crucial for the 2020 Maryland General Assembly to support HB1543. The CCEA seeks to equitably and sustainably help all Marylanders transition into a green economy requiring fossil fuel producers to pay for emissions and use the funds collected to invest in green infrastructure and education. CCEA will have a trifold effect on Maryland’s climate change goals by investing funds in 3 ways: (1) $350 million per year would go to fund the Kirwan Initiative; (2) $180-$500 million would to green infrastructure projects; and (3) $490-$850 million would go to Maryland’s most vulnerable populations. CCEA a holistic, equitable and climate focused bill that Maryland needs to enhance its Greenhouse Gas Reductions Act emission reduction goals while continuing to strengthen Maryland’s economy.

ANS is supportive of HB1543 due to its long history of educating young children all across the DMV region. ANS Educators via GreenKids, a grant funded educational outreach program, teach children of all ages about the importance of protecting our environment, especially in this time of climate change. ANS also has our own Nature Preschool on site at our Woodend Sanctuary and we know the importance of early childhood education, a strong area of emphasis in the Kirwan Initiative.

ANS support HB1543 for its climate change and education impacts and benefits. On behalf of ANS and our 28,000 members and supporters, we recommend that the House Economic Matters Committee support the passage of HB1543.

Sincerely,

Denisse Guitarra
Maryland Conservation Advocate
Audubon Naturalist Society