

2017 MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE SESSION PRIORITY BILLS



► Environmental Justice

The environmental justice movement seeks clean and healthy environments for communities that are overburdened by pollution and health hazards, and promotes meaningful community engagement in policy-making. In Annapolis this year, we will advocate for environmental justice by working on bills addressing at least two areas of documented disparities: food deserts and lead.



► The Clean Energy Jobs Act ——— VETO OVERRIDDEN

The General Assembly passed this bill, but the Governor vetoed it after the end of the legislative session. This bill will ensure 25% renewable energy by 2020. An override of the veto will assure actions that decrease air pollution that contributes to asthma and other health conditions. Air pollution is a human carcinogen and contributes to cardiovascular disease.



► Ban on Fracking ——— SB 0740

A regulatory framework is inadequate to protect us from the pervasive environmental and health effects of fracking. Since 2015, public health research has documented increased risk of adverse birth outcomes, asthma attacks, and migraines near highly fracked areas. Other disturbing issues that cannot be addressed by regulations include violence against women; drug and alcohol abuse near fracking sites; and community disruption and division. With the moratorium set to expire in 2017, we need the Maryland legislature to ban fracking in Maryland now.



► **Keep Antibiotics Effective** —→ HB 602 / SB 422

2 million infections and 23,000 deaths occur nationally every year due to antibiotic resistance. In the U.S., 70% of medically important antibiotics are sold for use in daily livestock production. This bill stops the daily sub-therapeutic application of antibiotics in factory farms. The Center for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics join the call for responsible use of antibiotics in animal agriculture.



► **Polystyrene Foam (Styrofoam) Ban** —→ HB 229 / SB 186

Maryland counties are already banning polystyrene food containers; this bill calls for Maryland to do the same. More readily released under heat, styrene leaches into food and drink served in foam containers, exposing humans to



chemicals that are classified by the National Institutes of Health as “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen.” In the water, tiny pieces of styrene can be ingested by fish or other wildlife, also exposing them to toxic chemicals.

For more information contact the Maryland Environmental Health Network’s Public Health Advocacy Coordinator, Rebecca Rehr at RCRehr@gmail.com.

www.MdEHN.org

The Maryland Environmental Health Network seeks to improve the health of Marylanders by minimizing exposures to environmental threats and toxic chemicals, through effective environmental legislation and institutional policies.

