



## Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

### DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: MARCH 26, 2025

#### CEEPC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. Sarah Bagley, City of Alexandria (Chair)
- Hon. Susan Cunningham, Arlington County
- Hon. Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park
- Hon. Alan Hew, City of College Park
- Hon. Barry Jackson, City of Rockville
- Hon. Bob Weir, Prince William County
- Jenn Aiosa, Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)
- Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town of Bladensburg
- Erica Bannerman, Prince George's County
- Christopher Beck, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
- Michele Blair, City of Laurel
- Noelani Brockett, Charles County
- Adriana Caldarelli, Prince George's County
- Randy Freed, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Beth Groth, Charles County
- Jenn Hatch, District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)
- Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Montgomery County
- Vince Maiden, Virginia Energy
- Giulia Manno, Prince William County
- Dale Medearis, Northern Virginia Regional Council (NVRC)
- Jon Monger, Montgomery County
- John Morrill, Fairfax County
- Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Lauren Paulet, City of Frederick
- Jenni Pompei, City of Greenbelt
- Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Matt Ries, DC Water
- Maria Sinner, VDOT
- Dr. Dann Sklarew, George Mason University
- William Washburn, ACPAC Chair
- Brittany Whited, DOEE

#### ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:

- Valerie Amor, City of Alexandria

- Mati Bazurto, City of Bowie
- Maggie Beetstra, Fairfax County
- Anna Bower, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Al Carr, DOEE
- Rachel Cleetus, Union of Concerned Scientists
- Naomi Cohen-Shields, DDOT
- Richard Dooley, Arlington County
- Brady Dye, Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)
- Jennifer Fioretti, Arlington County
- Ryan Freed, City of Alexandria
- John Lord, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)
- Eve Lukens-Day, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County
- Regina Moore, VDOT
- John Silcox, Fairfax County
- Michelle Smyk, Prince William County
- Yi Sun, Prince William County
- Steve Swarr, Loudoun County

#### COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Heidi Bonnaffon, COG Environmental Programs
- Robert Christopher, COG Environmental Programs
- Robert d'Abadie, COG Transportation Planning
- Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- Tim Masters, COG Environmental Programs
- Mark Moran, COG Transportation Planning
- Katherine Rainone, COG Transportation Planning



## 1. WELCOME AND MEETING SUMMARY

*Sarah Bagley, CEEPC Chair*

Climate, Energy, and Environmental Policy Committee (CEEPC) Chair Sarah Bagley called the March CEEPC meeting to order. The January CEEPC Meeting Summary was approved.

## 2. MEMBER ORIENTATION

*Maia Davis, COG Senior Planner*

COG is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address regional issues and plan for the future. CEEPC was created by the COG Board of Directors in 2009 and therefore reports to and advises the COG Board of Directors. CEEPC's purpose is to provide leadership on climate change, energy, green buildings, alternative fuels, solid waste and recycling issues. The six committees that advise CEEPC and support the implementation of its goals are: Recycling Committee/Solid Waste Managers, CEEPC Legislative Committee, Built Environment and Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC), Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC), Regional Tree Canopy Sub-Committee (RTCS), and Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group. Per the bylaws, CEEPC membership is comprised of elected officials from each COG local government, representatives from state government, and stakeholders such as utilities, environmental groups, schools, and federal/regional agencies. To vote on anything there must be a quorum, which means one third of voting members or alternates are present.

## 3. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*Robert Christopher, COG Environmental Planner*

The CEEPC Legislative Committee sent comment letters for the following bills:

### Virginia

- HB 1616: Offshore Wind Industry Workforce Program and Fund
  - The bill directs the Director of the Department of Energy to identify and develop training resources to advance workforce development in the offshore wind industry in the Commonwealth.
  - Vetoed by Governor Youngkin 3/24/2025
- HB 1819: Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE)
  - The bill includes adding a definition of property owner to include a lessee and providing that the lessee may also be eligible for a C-PACE loan by complying with certain conditions, including consent of the fee simple property owner.
  - Signed by Governor Youngkin 3/21/2025
- HB 18803/SB 1040: Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Program Requirements
  - The bill removes the requirement for a solar-powered or wind-powered generation facility to have a capacity of no less than 50 kilowatts to qualify for a third-party power purchase agreement under a pilot program.
  - Vetoed by Governor Youngkin 5/2/2025

### Maryland

- HB 232: Environment – Municipal Recycling Plans – Requirement
  - Aims to establish the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program to increase the reuse and recycling of beverage containers. The bill prohibits producers from selling, offering for sale, or distributing redeemable

- beverage containers unless that are registered with the Department of the Environment, pay a certain fee, and are part of a stewardship organization.
  - Awaiting further action in the committee.
- **HB 407: Environment – Municipal Recycling Plans – Requirement**
  - Requires the largest municipal corporation in each county to adopt or update recycling plans every five years, starting on or before January 1, 2026. These plans must provide for a reduction through recycling of a certain percentage of the municipal corporation's solid waste stream by weight.
  - Awaiting further action in the committee.
- **SB 149: Responding to Emergency Needs From Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025**
  - Establishes the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Payment Program to secure payments from businesses that extract fossil fuels or refine petroleum products to provide revenue for state efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and address health impacts on vulnerable populations.
  - Passed in both Chambers, awaiting Governor Moore's approval.

#### **4. FEDERAL DEREGULATORY UPDATE: ENDANGERMENT FINDING**

*Dr. Rachel Cleetus, Ph.D., Policy Director, Climate and Energy Program, Union of Concerned Scientists*

The Union of Concerned Scientists is a science-based advocacy organization that informs policy making. The Trump administration has engaged in a series of actions which have included drastically reducing agency staff, budgets, regulations, and enforcement. Specifically for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), actions target regulations that protect against a variety of pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHGs) while boosting fossil fuel interests. At the EPA there has been a mass firing of agency staff, work areas eliminated or censored, a pivot from the core agency mission, abrupt termination of technical support, and undermining of the ability of scientists to do their work independently of political interests.

Several regulations up for reconsideration are related to power plants, which include reconsideration of power plant carbon standards, reconsideration of the Mercury and Air Toxics stands, and updating coal ash regulations. Other climate related rollbacks include reconsideration of the Endangerment Finding, overhaul of the Social Cost of Carbon, reconsideration of oil and gas methane standards, and reconsideration of the mandatory GHG reporting program. The Endangerment Finding concluded that the current and projected concentrations of GHGs in the atmosphere threaten public health and welfare. This finding served as the foundation for EPA's regulations on GHG emissions from various sources such as power plants and vehicles. The science supporting the Endangerment Finding should be indisputable in court, making reconsideration a waste of time and taxpayer money.

**Discussion:** The rate of warming has been accelerating in the last two decades, and carbon dioxide levels are the highest they have been in human existence. The actions local governments can take are ensuring policymakers understand the facts and implications of policies.

#### **5. MID-COURSE REVIEW: RENEWABLE PORTFOLIO STANDARDS**

*Tim Masters, COG Environmental Planner*

COG is conducting a Mid-Course Review to assess progress toward meeting COG's 2030 Climate and Energy Goals, which include a 50 percent reduction in GHGs below 2005 levels by 2030. The findings will inform considerations for establishing new goals and assist with the Comprehensive

Climate Action Plan (CCAP) development. The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) programs in DC, Maryland, and Virginia are among the most important policy drivers to decarbonize the electricity sector. The RPS is a regulatory mandate requiring electricity suppliers to source a certain percentage of their energy from renewable resources. Since 2005, grid emission rates have decreased by 48 percent, which is due to significant increases in renewable energy deployment and switching from coal to natural gas.

The District of Columbia has one of the most ambitious RPS goals in the country, with a target of 100 percent renewable energy by 2032. Challenges to the District's RPS are market volatility on Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs), as well as slow interconnection to the grid.

Maryland's RPS was established in 2004 and has undergone multiple revisions since. Current requirements are 50 percent renewable energy by 2030, and a 2024 Executive Order from Governor Wes Moore requires 100 percent renewable energy by 2035. The 2022 Maryland RPS compliance report found that standards are being met through renewable energy credits (RECs), however, they are falling behind on meeting the 2030 target due to supply-side constraints. The challenges Maryland faces include grid interconnection delays, offshore wind expansion delays, and increasing demand for electrification. Recent policy initiatives include removing interconnection restrictions, offshore wind reforms, and solar market incentives.

Virginia's RPS was established in 2020 through the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA). This requires 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2045 for Dominion Energy and 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2050 for Appalachian Power. As opposed to DC and Maryland, the Virginia RPS does not require in-state generation to comply, and so far, Dominion Energy and Appalachian Power have heavily relied on REC purchases, rather than building in-state generation. Challenges in Virginia include the lack of in-state renewable development, increasing electrification demand, delays in offshore wind deployment, and over-reliance on natural gas.

**Discussion:** There should be clarification in the state's RPS that only bundled RECs should be allowed to ensure true additionality, as unbundled RECs are vulnerable to double-counting. It is believed that RECs are unbundled but are registered through the PJM's General Attribution Tracking System (GATS) to remove the double-counting concern.

## **6. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER UPDATES**

*Written updates provided in advance*

### **A. Built Environment Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC)**

- The Built Environment Energy and Advisory Committee met on February 20th. The meeting included presentations on the 2025 committee priorities, the 2030 climate goals mid-course review, and greenhouse gas emissions inventory and energy star certification for data centers.
- Key discussion elements include local governments providing input on the mid-course review progress survey, emission projections and accurate data collection for data centers, and incorporating electrification and heat pumps as priorities for the committee. The next BEEAC meeting is April 17th.

### **B. Air And Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)**

- ACPAC's March 17th meeting focused on providing preliminary feedback on MWAQC's Draft Environmental Justice (EJ) Subcommittee Action Plan and its first community listening session on the new EJ Toolkit development process. ACPAC will package their comments on MWAQC's [EJ Subcommittee Action Plan](#) and submit them to COG Staff before the March 26 EJ Subcommittee meeting. The community listening session segment of the meeting was

facilitated by Equival Partners, COG's consultant on the EJ Toolkit Refresh. Members of the public and community were invited to engage and discuss EJ challenges facing in their communities. COG staff also held two virtual listening sessions in February and March with COG local government staff to hear about their EJ engagement challenges, successes, and needs. Feedback from both perspectives will be incorporated into the EJ Toolkit refresh this year. The next ACPAC meeting is May 19th.

C. Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group

- The March 20th Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment Working Group was chaired by Amy Posner, Electric Vehicle Planner with the City of Alexandria and new committee Chair. Key highlights from the meeting include a presentation from Huoi Trieu, King County Special Projects Manager, who provided an insightful overview of King County Metro's transition to a zero emissions fleet. Huoi Trieu's presentation offered valuable strategies and progress updates on achieving a sustainable fleet. Mel Hogg from the District Department of Energy & Environment discussed utility pole electric vehicle charging. REVD's next meeting is May 15th.

D. Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)

- The Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition is collecting regional data on the reduction of Greenhouse Gas Reductions by public and private fleets for 2024. Please contact [Blake Showes](#) to submit data on your efforts. The data from the GWRCCC Annual Report will be shared with the U.S. Department of Energy.
- GWRCCC is hosting a 5K Walk, Vehicle Display and Green Expo on Saturday, April 19th at 10am to 3pm. We would like your organization to walk with us, have an exhibit booth and display a vehicle. Visit [GWRCCC's website](#) to register, or call 202-671-1580.

E. Recycling Committee

- The COG Recycling Committee is planning two media campaigns for the Spring: Go Recycle and Battery Management. The initiatives will use paid media and a press conference to reach citizens in the region.

F. Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS)

- The Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee has an agreed upon an outline for the Tree Canopy Action Plan development and has formed three subgroups to work on Action Plan strategies this year. The RTCS would like to involve additional COG foresters in the Action Plan development.

G. Staff Updates

A. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program

- COG, with ICF support, is developing the MSA-scale Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) under EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Program (CPRG). COG is continuing the work to develop the technical aspects of the CCAP including the GHG inventories, GHG projections, GHG measures analysis, co-pollutant benefits analysis, Low-Income Disadvantaged Communities (LIDAC) benefits analysis, and workforce development analysis. COG will also continue to engage stakeholders across sectors with an emphasis on data centers, workforce, and LIDAC discussions to inform the technical analyses and plan development.

B. Charging And Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Grant

- On August 27, 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) awarded \$3.9 million to COG through the CFI Program to support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. For the Round 1B award, COG partnered with the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Manassas and Arlington, Fairfax, Frederick, and Prince George's Counties to deploy publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure at local government facilities in their communities. The majority of the sites are in or near historically disadvantaged communities, closing the gaps in

the existing charging network and bringing greater opportunity to communities most impacted by the effects of climate change. COG has also partnered with the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC) on equitable engagement and workforce development opportunities, including listening sessions with disadvantaged communities, job fairs, and EV infrastructure trainings.

- The FHWA-COG CFI agreement was signed by FHWA and fully executed as of January 12, 2025. The signing of the agreement obligated Phase I Pre-Construction funds, which is 15 percent of the total funds. Phase I includes initial design plans for EV infrastructure and completion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) process for all locations included in this project as well as initial equitable engagement and workforce development activities. COG considers Phase I Pre-Construction funds to be low risk and continues the work of executing sub-grantee agreements. At this time Phase II funds have not been obligated

## **7. ADJOURN**

*Sarah Bagley, CEEPC Chair*

Chair Bagley adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2025 include:

- Wednesday, May 28, 2025
- Wednesday, July 23, 2025
- Wednesday, September 24, 2025
- Wednesday, November 19, 2025

*All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the COG website or by clicking the link below –*

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2025/3/26/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/>