

MEET THE

MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SCORECARD

SUMMARIZING THE
2019 - 2021 REPORT



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT,
ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE, &
HEALTH**



SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

WHAT IS A SCORECARD

INTRODUCTION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) defines environmental justice (EJ) as: "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies" (1). Scorecard systems have been used for years by organizations such as the League of Conservation Voters and the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) to assess legislative and agency environmental actions (2,3).

Using these scorecards as models, the Center for Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health (CEEJH) developed a scorecard to track voting histories on environmental justice legislation. Our models are guided by the [17 Principles of Environmental Justice](#) and [CEJA's 8 Principles of Collaboration](#) (4,5). We also provide recommendations on policy and agency actions to promote environmental justice in the state of Maryland.

You can read the full Maryland Legislative Environmental Justice Scorecard (2019 - 2021) report on the [CEEJH website](#).



METHODS

HOW DOES IT WORK

We downloaded the Maryland General Assembly's legislative data from the years of 2019-2021, and used the keyword search tool to narrow down environmental justice (EJ) legislation. Keywords ranged from broader terms which included: environment, public health, and economic & community development. Once these bills were identified, the potential EJ bills were screened for related language such as "underserved", "overburdened", "health differentials", "health disparities", "health equity", etc. In summary, we looked for terminology that suggests that there are communities within the state that are differentially burdened by environmental hazards.

For medium priority EJ bills, raw scores were calculated as: $(\text{Total Votes for EJ} / \text{Total EJ Voting Opportunities})$

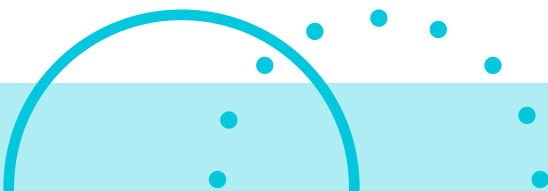
For high priority EJ bills, raw scores were calculated as: $[(\text{Total Votes for EJ} * 2) / (\text{Total EJ Voting Opportunities})]$

To aggregate the weighted raw scores of medium and high priority, this formula was used: $[(\text{Raw Score for Medium Priority Bills} + \text{Raw Score for High Priority Bills}) / (\text{Total Voting Opportunities}) + (\text{Co-sponsor Bonus If Applicable})]$



STEPS

- 1** Isolated EJ bills in Excel sheet; we did a second screening for "inter-rater" reliability and unanimous decision-making.
 - 2** We ranked the list of EJ bills into "high," "medium," and "low." categories. Then, discarded low priority bills and assessed voting records of the rest.
 - 3** Final approved spreadsheet imported into Python to generate raw scores. Weighted raw scores were aggregated and converted to percentiles. Bills with voting opportunities >3 SDs below the mean were excluded.
 - 4** Final legislative scores were compared to the MD EJSscreen scores
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MOST NOTABLE

The first 2 tables show each Maryland legislator's name, their percentile calculated in the methods section, their chamber (House or Senate), and their party (Democratic or Republican). The higher the percentile, the more the legislator's votes were in favor of medium and high priority bills relating to environmental justice from 2019 - 2021.

Top 10 Overall Legislators

Name	Percentile	Chamber	Party
Rosenberg S	100.00	House	Dem
Henson S	99.50	House	Dem
Washington M	98.99	Senate	Dem
Jones D	97.99	House	Dem
Smith W	97.99	Senate	Dem
Patterson O	97.49	Senate	Dem
Lam C	96.98	Senate	Dem
Bridges T	96.48	House	Dem
Young R	95.98	Senate	Dem
Elfreth S	94.47	Senate	Dem
Guzzone G	94.47	Senate	Dem
Hester K	94.47	Senate	Dem

*3-way tie for 10th place!

Top 10 Bottom Legislators

Name	Percentile	Chamber	Party
Kittleman T	0.50	House	Rep
Boteler J	1.00	House	Rep
Novotny R	1.51	House	Rep
Grammer R	2.01	House	Rep
Fisher M	2.51	House	Rep
Mangione N	3.02	House	Rep
Rose A	3.02	House	Rep
Cox D	4.02	House	Rep
Ghrist J	4.02	House	Rep
Shoemaker H	5.03	House	Rep

Overall, we observe Democrats scoring higher than their Republican counterparts (64.2% compared to 16.3%), and Senators scoring significantly higher than House Members (61.1% compared to 46.0%). House Republicans were the weakest on EJ legislation with an average percentile ranking of 12.2%, while Democratic Senators scored the highest with an average percentile ranking of 75.4%. In the report, it is noted that there were decreased opportunities to vote on EJ legislators due to Covid-19 in 2020.

Average EJ Percentile by Branch and Session

Row labels	Dem	Rep	Grand Total
Senate	0.75	0.29	0.61
House	0.61	0.12	0.46
Grand Total	0.64	0.16	0.50

The next 2 tables order the ten Maryland legislators whose districts had the best and worst MD EJSCREEN score. On the [MD EJSCREEN mapping tool](#), a higher number (ranging 0 - 100) indicates more environmental burdens or more environmental injustice present in the area. Contrary to voting score, the districts with the best MD EJSCREEN score tended to be Republican, while those with the worst EJ Scores leaned Democrat.

Ten Legislators Whose Districts Have the Best MD EJSCREEN Scores

Name	PARTY	Chamber	District	VOTING SCORE	MD EJSCREEN SCORE
Eckardt A	Rep	Senate	37A	27.6	20.3
Sample-Hughes S	Dem	House	37A	31.7	20.3
Bailey J	Rep	Senate	29C/B	22.6	30.63
Clark G	Rep	House	29C	20.6	30.63
Crosby B	Dem	House	29B	44.2	32.38
Gallion J	Rep	Senate	35A	25.1	37.98
Hornberger K	Rep	House	35A	29.6	37.98
Adams C	Rep	House	37B	11.6	38.93
Mautz IV J	Rep	House	37B	10.1	38.93
Kramer B	Dem	Senate	19	69.8	41.23

Ten Legislators Whose Districts Have the Worst MD EJSCREEN Scores

Name	PARTY	Chamber	District	VOTING SCORE	MD EJSCREEN SCORE
Ferguson IV W	Dem	Senate	46	69.8	91.06
Clippinger L	Dem	House	46	67.8	91.06
Lewis R	Dem	House	46	88.9	91.06
Lierman B	Dem	House	46	91.5	91.06
Simonaire B	Rep	Senate	31A	26.6	87.22
Carey E	Dem	House	31A	42.7	87.22
Klausmeier K	Dem	Senate	8	52.8	86.39
Bhandari H	Dem	House	8	58.8	86.39
Boteler III J	Rep	House	8	1	86.39
Jackson C	Dem	House	8	81.9	86.39

SUMMARY

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

While the legislative scoring appeared to follow partisan lines, the MD EJSCREEN scoring did not. This can likely be attributed to the fact the legislators were tied to the district they represented; therefore, their MD EJSCREEN scores were clustered and identical to the other Senators and Representatives assigned to that district. Meanwhile, the voting scores were individualized and free of ecological bias.

Overall, the report's findings seem to follow partisan lines as the [top 10 EJ legislators were all Democrats](#) and the party voted overwhelmingly in favor of EJ bills, compared to their Republican counterparts. Notably, there are 3 Maryland legislators who stood out in their votes for environmental justice bills in the report:



**SAMUEL I.
ROSENBERG**



**SHANEKA T.
HENSON**



**MARY L.
WASHINGTON**

Samuel I. Rosenberg (House of Delegates): Delegate Rosenberg has served as a Member of the Maryland House since 1983. He has been the sole sponsor for a plethora of environmental justice-related bills which has elevated his EJ rating, including 2020 HB1206, 2020 HB0457, 2020 HB 0879, and 2020 HB1425.

Shaneka T. Henson (House of Delegates): Delegate Henson co-sponsored 2020 HB 1425 which required the Department of Environmental to adopt a final plan to reduce statewide emissions by 60% by 2030 and set the state of Maryland on a path to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

Mary L. Washington (Senate): Delegate Washington has been instrumental in introducing and passing legislation in the House of Delegates to protect homes from acquisition based on unpaid water bills. Mary's tax sale prohibition bill prevents families from losing their homes for unaffordable or incorrect water bills.

SUMMARY

Recommendations for environmental justice policy in Maryland:

- 1** Support a Just Recovery From COVID-19.
- 2** Incorporate environmental justice screening and mapping (EJSM) tools into environmental policy and decision-making that microtarget distressed communities.
- 3** Create EJ regional hotspot crisis teams familiar with specific regions.
- 4** Measure the success of bills.
- 5** Develop inclusive environmental mitigation strategies.
- 6** Collaborative governance with residents for decision-making.
- 7** Mandate environmental justice workshops and training for state legislators.
- 8** Include outcome metrics to track progress within bill language.

REFERENCES

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This *Meet the Legislative Scorecard* document was created to summarize the *Maryland Legislative Environmental Justice Scorecard* report for years 2019 - 2021 made by the team at the Center for Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health (CEEJH) from University of Maryland's Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health. You can read the full report on the [CEEJH website](https://www.ceejh.org/).

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