

GOAT Noat for May 2019 from the GREEN Organizing Action TEAM (GOAT)

There were some big wins on environmental issues in the 2019 Maryland legislative session, and clearly there is still work to be done.

Clean Energy Jobs Act PASSED. It doubles Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard policy to 50% renewable electricity by 2030 and requires the state to provide a plan to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2040. It is unknown whether Gov. Hogan will sign the bill. Downside is that trash incineration still gets clean energy subsidies.

Polystyrene foam ban PASSED. No more Styrofoam food containers at businesses and schools. If the governor signs the bill, Maryland would become the first state to ban these containers.

Community solar pilot program EXTENDED through July 1, 2022.

Energy storage pilot project PASSED. This requires investor-owned electric utility companies in Maryland (BGE is one) to solicit two energy storage projects whose results will be used to evaluate how to best use the technology in the future. This is expected to lead to regulatory reforms and market incentives to increase the use of energy storage technologies in the state.

Green Amendment WITHDRAWN after unfavorable report in committee. Annapolis Young Friend Kallan Benson protested outside of the State House throughout the session for this amendment that would have added Marylanders' right to breathable air, uncontaminated water, and a clean environment to the state constitution.

Maryland Pipeline & Water Protection Act UNFAVORABLE REPORT in subcommittee. This would have required the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to conduct full, independent reviews of proposed fracked-gas pipelines using its authority under the federal Clean Water Act. MDE could not waive this authority as it did for the Potomac Pipeline.

Transportation Climate Accountability Act STALLED in committee. These bills would have required studies about the climate effects of proposed highway expansion projects.



Planting the garden on April 13. Photo by Bess Keller