June 20, 2020

Dear Senator Harris McDowell and Members of the General Assembly:

On behalf of the many pastor and members of the Interdenominational Minister's Action Council of Delaware (IMAC), I am pleased to offer my brief comments in support of SB250.

We are witnessing a time when America's eyes and hearts have been opened to a myriad of injustices that have long been ignored or denied. Along with the racial and social wrongs that are being addressed, we see the many threats connected to Climate Change as another form of injustice. Climate Change continues to adversely impact many black and brown communities in Delaware. The longstanding challenges of pollution in urban communities are further exacerbated by the problems associated with Climate Change.

Recent studies have shown that pregnant mothers who are exposed to high temperatures or air pollution are more likely to have babies who are premature, underweight or stillborn. Black mothers and their babies are harmed at a much higher rate than other populations. Many urban communities in Delaware are likely to be hotter than surrounding areas, due to a phenomenon known as the "heat island" effect.

IMAC supports SB250 because it speaks to environmental issues that adversely affect many of our congregants; such as, reduced harmful emissions, reduced Greenhouse gases, as well as efficient, affordable and clean energy. We believe that the push for environmental justice is as important as our fight for racial and social equality. We are confident that this legislation will strengthen our communities and make for a healthier Delaware.

Sincerely,
Reverend Dr. Vincent P. Oliver,
President, Interdenominational Ministers Action Council