

## Climate Adaptation Bill

*Why it is needed:* Current prevailing practice is to make decisions based on past climate patterns rather than those observed in the present or imminently anticipated. This practice makes it impossible to adequately address the social, environmental, and fiscal risks posed by unprepared critical infrastructure, development, and communities.

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### **HD 1954: An Act promoting sustainable investment, economic security and fiscal responsibility with respect to climate risks**

**Sponsor:** Representative Sarah Peake

### **SD 2203: An Act promoting sustainable development across the Commonwealth**

**Sponsor:** Senator Nick Collins

**Summary:** The bill requires state government to consider and address reasonably foreseeable risks of climate change in licensing, permitting, financing, and capital projects. Further, the bill addresses gaps in risk assessment for critical infrastructure and new development by requiring identification and action on climate risks for utilities and buildings. Finally, the bill establishes a mandatory educational training program for local boards and commissions on the effects of climate change.

#### **Bill Content:**

- **Consistency:** requires Commonwealth to adopt a climate projection dataset based on the best available science, to be uniformly applied by state agencies when considering climate change risks, and to be updated every five years.
- **Permitting, Financing, and Capital Projects:** requires identification and disclosure of climate risks and adoption of reasonable climate adaptation measures in all permit applications, authorizations, certificates and other approvals, grants, loans and other financing.
- **Critical Infrastructure:** requires identification of climate risks for projects and facilities during ratemaking proceedings and siting decisions, and demonstrates that risks are addressed in a manner appropriate given the risk tolerance of the infrastructure.
- **Building Codes:** requires the Board of Building Regulations and Standards to undertake a one-year study of the feasibility, impact, economics, and merit of incorporating consideration of climate risks into code standards.
- **Environmental Justice:** requires that climate risk disclosures and adaptation measures specified in this bill identify and alleviate disparate impacts on vulnerable communities including low and moderate income and minority populations.
- **Education:** establishes training program for local boards and commissions and requires members to complete five hours of training every two years.