



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

GEORGE C. HOGAN: Business Manager • THOMAS C. MYERS: President • RICHARD D. WILKINSON: Vice President
JOSEPH F. DABBS: Financial Secretary • RICHARD G. MURPHY: Recording Secretary • PAULO C. HENRIQUES: Treasurer



Testimony in strong opposition to HB 1545

Electric Generation – Transition from Fossil Fuels – Carbon Dioxide Emissions Rate and Transition Account

To the Honorable Dereck Davis, Chair and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Thomas Myers, President of IBEW Local 26

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my strong opposition to HB 1545.

As President of IBEW Local 26, I represent the interest of thousands of Maryland electricians, who own property and vote in many of the counties in our State. These Local 26 members reside and pay taxes in Maryland. They support the business environment of our state with the wages they earn and spend.

House Bill 1545, “Electric Generation – Transition from Fossil Fuels – Carbon Dioxide Emissions Rate and Transition Account” on its face sets a limit to the carbon dioxide emission of a coal burning power facility in the State of MD to 180 pounds per million BTU’s. This number is an unreachable number with current technology and would demand that the coal burning plants in Maryland be shuttered beginning on and after Oct 1, 2023.

I will begin with a few statements that are short and clear, the later information will build on each statement. Reference material is in super script. HB 1545 has the following shortcomings:

- 1) Hundreds if not thousands of jobs will be lost with no guarantee of equivalent employment.
- 2) The funding promised by this bill has already been targeted by other legislation and will likely not be available in the amounts needed.
- 3) Businesses and communities will be affected financially by this legislation.
- 4) Maryland’s renewable energy is not able to make of the short fall of power if these units are shuttered.
- 5) Maryland is already a net importer of electrical energy; therefore, this legislation will make it worse.
- 6) There will be little if any reduction in the mid-Atlantic region’s overall CO2 emissions.
- 7) The technology is not currently in place to make this achievable in any meaningful fashion.

To be clear, my opposition to this bill is only partially because of the hundreds, possibly thousands, of well-paying jobs with benefits and retirements that would be lost. Those jobs are held by citizens of Maryland that would not be “made whole” by the Fossil Fuel Transition Account that is already being claimed by multiple bills in front of Maryland’s legislature. The millions of dollars in lost wages, lost benefits, lost security, the secondary businesses closing, the damage done to the economic welfare of employee’s communities, lost revenue for businesses which reach far beyond the ability of the grants





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and training promised in this bill. There is no way to guarantee funds promised in the bill will be available, or even allocated for that purpose 1 or 2 or 10 years from now.

A large majority of the people I represent live in MD. They depend upon a reliable, constant supply of electric power. As do the hospitals, the schools, the start up businesses and EVERYONE ELSE. This bill may hinder Maryland's ability to supply adequate electricity to its citizens and businesses.

Currently, the renewable energy produces just 12% of Maryland's in state net generation and half of that is Hydropower. ⁽¹⁾

Coal burning facilities produce just 23% of the energy generated in Maryland, down from the 50%-mark coal has historically held. ⁽²⁾ Maryland is ALREADY lowering its dependence on coal produced electricity. As a point of reference, Maryland is already a net importer of electric energy ⁽³⁾. Currently Maryland consumes almost twice the electrical energy it produces in state. In simple terms; Maryland already imports electricity from neighboring states that would not be restricted by these over reaching laws being pushed by the Sierra Club. When a customer needs power, that power is pulled off the electrical grid, that grid is fed by generating plants from around the region. Pennsylvania produces power with coal, that power will be consumed everywhere the power lines reach. If Maryland needs more power than it's producing, Maryland gets it from Pennsylvania, or Ohio or wherever. The pollution, including Carbon Dioxide, that is generated from plants in other state does not recognize state borders.

The renewable energy portfolio of MD cannot make up the production capability of the coal burning plants during peak time. This is a current fact. It may change in the future but it is not so now. To shutter 12 power production units, in a state where everybody uses electricity to cool in the heat of summer and 4 out of 10 household use electricity to heat their homes, ⁽⁴⁾ is a dangerous and reckless proposition. If the power is not available because of lack of production, people and businesses will be hurt, if the power is available, because of other states' production, the purpose of the bill is lost because the power is produced by coal elsewhere and all the people who WILL lose their jobs will have suffered for no improvement in CO2 emissions.

The technology to implement this vast overhaul of the electrical power production of the state and the nation is currently being developed and / or implemented. I have yet to see evidence of "grid – level battery storage" in any capacity other than research. Without storage capability, renewable energies are a decentralized source, meaning it can be used at individual locations, or campuses. In small areas that have gone green (Aspen, Colorado for example), 46% of the energy supply comes from Hydroelectric, its other green energies are wind and solar. The simple fact is that when the wind isn't blowing or the sun is not shining, Aspen still gets the energy it needs, the claim of 100% renewable is on average. Aspen purchases as much "green energy" as is available, but when the renewables fail, the power Aspen consumes comes from the grid, and much of that is from traditional sources.

Finally, for whatever reason, the Sierra Club has decided that Maryland will be one of their battleground states this year. I do not believe that the Legislature of this State needs to be seen as the testing ground for getting "green laws" passed. We all recognize climate change as an existential threat. It must be addressed nationally, and in a systematic method. Proving that the infrastructure is in place PRIOR to





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writing laws that affect traditional fuel production is what is needed. An in-depth study regarding pollution levels, existing production and storage capability, peak energy requirements, regional emissions and, not the least, the affect this type of legislation will have on the communities, families and business that rely on these units, should the eventually be shuttered, is the minimum the state of MD should require before even entertaining this type of legislation

(1&2) U.S. EIA, Electricity Data Browser, Maryland, Net generation for all sectors (thousand megawatt hours), annual, 2001-18.

(3) U.S. EIA, Maryland Electricity Profile 2017, Table 10, Supply and disposition of electricity, 1990 through 2017.

(4) U.S. Census Bureau, American Factfinders, Maryland, Table B25040, House Heating Fuel, 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

