

February 18, 2021

**Committee:** House Economic Matters Committee

**Testimony on:** HB66 "Maryland Coal Community Transition Act of 2021"

**Position:** Favorable

**Hearing Date:** February 18, 2021

Dear Members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

The purpose of this letter is to provide a real life example of an instance where educational assistance of a local power plant worker yielded very positive results.

From 1983 to 1989 I was employed as a laboratory technician at PEPCO's Chalk Point Power Plant in southern Prince Georges County, Maryland. At the time, this union job was very sought after and I felt lucky to have it. I had an A.A. degree from Charles County Community College and had worked for two years as a laboratory technician. The work was interesting and I enjoyed the relationships made with my fellow workers. Money was of course tight, but I was able to start a family and buy a townhouse in La Plata on my salary.

When I learned of a tuition reimbursement program offered by the company, I decided to utilize it and return to college pursue a computer science degree. I took a few courses at night each semester at the University of Maryland University College and in December 1989 I graduated with a B.S. in Computer Science. While I enjoyed working at the power plant very much, I transitioned into an IT career in January 1989. In the years since, I have worked at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office (EPA), University of Maryland Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, and the last 15 years with the U.S. Census Bureau.

When I heard of the current issue of retiring the coal fired power plants in Southern Maryland, I of course thought of the impact on the current workers. I also reflected on how being provided a "leg up" with tuition assistance all those years ago was the catalyst for a very rewarding career.

With the coal plants in Maryland retiring in the coming years I hope you will support this bill to help establish more programs to create additional programs to help workers through this transition. Please consider my story as you determine how best to transition away from coal.

Sincerely,

John Posey  
Charles County resident