



1000 Maine Avenue, SW | Suite 700 | Washington, DC 20024 | www.washingtongas.com

**TESTIMONY OF
THE
WASHINGTON GAS & LIGHT
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE**

FEBRUARY 3, 2021

**HOUSE BILL 88 – PUBLIC UTILITIES - ENERGY DISTRIBUTION PLANNING AND REQUIRED
LABOR STANDARDS**

POSITION: OPPOSE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments regarding House Bill 88 (HB 88). House Bill amends §7-801 of the Public Utility Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to establish a Distribution System Planning Workgroup to study issues related to energy distribution planning and implementation within the State. The purpose of establishing the workgroup is to understand if the current electric distribution system can support Maryland climate policy goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainability is a core value at Washington Gas & Light (WGL), as is the need to provide affordable and resilient energy. We strive to be responsible stewards of the environment by providing clean energy solutions to our customers. While WGL supports the underlying goal of HB 88, the bill undermines current Public Service Commission (PSC) initiatives.

The establishment of another workgroup, as required by HB 88, for the sole purpose of studying energy distribution as required in HB 88 is duplicative of current efforts. In 2017, the PSC initiated the Public Conference 44 (PC44) proceeding to conduct a targeted review of the electric distribution system in Maryland. More specifically, the PC44 was tasked with examining rate-related issues impacting distributed energy resources. To date, WG has acted as an intervenor in proceedings filed under the PC44 and most recently requested the PSC to evaluate utility investment strategies and distribution system planning practices. The PC44 has given WG, and other gas utility companies the opportunity to comment, collaborate, and develop forward looking solutions to address Maryland's climate challenges.

Further, if enacted HB 88 would not only disrupt current efforts that have received buy-in from many of the utility companies but would require additional state funding and resources to fully

implement HB 88. As the State rebounds amidst the global pandemic, it would be an efficient use of resources to allow the PSC to continue its current efforts.

For the above stated reasons, we urge an unfavorable committee report.

Dytonia “Dy” Reed, Esq., State Government Relations and Public Policy Manager
M 202.379.6993 | dytonia.reed@washgas.com