

HB0397\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV

2/22/2024

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**TESTIMONY ON HB#0397 – FAVORABLE**

**Public Utilities – Thermal Energy Network Systems – Authorization and Establishment  
(Working for Accessible Renewable Maryland Thermal Heat (WARMTH) Act)**

**TO:** Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and members of the Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0397, Public Utilities – Thermal Energy Network Systems – Authorization and Establishment (Working for Accessible Renewable Maryland Thermal Heat (WARMTH) Act)**

Maryland faces two critical needs. The primary need is to act responsibly to create policies and procedures that ensure climate protection; a plan to deal with climate change. This critical need is to manage sources of energy that involve fossil fuel sources to mitigate the negative effects of the use of fossil fuel. The second critical need to have available multiple sources to provide heating for persons in Maryland, warmth when it is cold.

This bill attempts to ensure gas companies will behave in a responsible manner in creation of a pilot thermal energy network system that will satisfy the two goals of providing warmth while mitigating negative impacts of natural gas usage to accomplish that. We need to know if natural gas can be used without attendant harm to the environment.

This bill will make gas companies responsible for better planning on how that resource can be used without damaging the climate. It will serve to make collection of data to make future decisions more informed.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass HB0397.**