



**INFORMATIONAL ONLY – House Bill 917
DOT and Maryland Transportation Authority – Utilities Installation – Data Submission
House Economic Matters Committee**

Columbia Gas of Maryland, Inc., a natural gas utility providing energy to more than 34,000 customers in Maryland’s western counties of Allegany, Garrett and Washington, understands the purpose of House Bill 917. We do, however, wish to raise a security concern related to the proposal.

The legislation requires a utility owner to submit to the Department of Transportation and the Maryland Transportation Authority information pertaining to the installation or relocation of facilities, infrastructure, or appurtenances within or on rights-of-way or property owned or controlled by the Department or the Authority within 60 days.

The legislation seeks to improve the collection of data by the Department or the Authority related to new utility installations and relocations going forward, ensuring future Department and Authority projects are aware of utility facilities in their rights-of-way. Columbia concurs improved data collection and utility coordination with the Department or the Authority increases safety and reduces costs for Marylanders in the future.

Columbia is concerned with a requirement of the legislation to provide the location information “georeferenced in a digital format”. Natural gas companies safeguard and protect the specific location of natural gas pipelines and other facilities. Our facilities are critical infrastructure and location information needs to be secured and protected. The mandate to provide this information in only digital formats to the Department or the Authority may violate company security protocols and such digital only information could be compromised in the future.

Columbia recommends this security issue be considered further as this legislation continues through the legislative process. Thank you.

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Contact:
Carville Collins
(410) 580-4125
carville.collins@dlapiper.com

Contact:
Pete Trufahnestock
(717) 903-8674
ptrufahnestock@nisource.com