



Statement

of

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before the

**Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
The Maryland State Senate**

March 21, 2024

RE: HB 1296 - "Electricity - Offshore Wind Projects - Alterations"

Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

My name is Travis Fisher, Director of Energy and Environmental Policy at the Cato Institute.

Regarding HB 1296, I want to highlight that no one has built an offshore wind project in the United States without a state-level mandate, and offshore wind remains a very expensive energy resource for the people of Maryland.

I join you as an expert witness and a resident of Maryland. My wife and I are raising a family (and paying an electric bill) in Silver Spring. And it's frustrating when I see Maryland pursue unwise energy policies.

I estimate the offshore wind mandate will cost each household in Maryland more than \$25,000.

Unreliable energy like offshore wind is particularly costly because it can't really replace existing power plants. We end up paying for offshore wind plus backup sources like gas-fired generators.

We have an opportunity now to reevaluate offshore wind policy. Wind developers keep asking eastern states for more subsidies, but we need to put the people of Maryland first.

It's not too late to recognize the folly of the forced energy transition and drop the offshore wind mandate in Maryland.

The best path forward is to see what gets built without the mandate. Again, no one has built an offshore wind project in the United States without a state-level mandate. The only way to know what type of power plant makes the most sense for the people of Maryland is to put it to the market test.

Thank you.