

HB398 - FAVORABLE

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**HB 398 - Abundant Affordable Clean Energy - Procurement and Development
(AACE Act)**

Economic Matters Committee

February 6, 2025

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee.

I live in the Carole Highlands neighborhood of Prince George's County, in Legislative District 47B. My address is 7219 16th Ave, Takoma Park.

I grew up just a few miles downwind from several coal-burning power plants. As a child I wanted to go fishing like my friends did, but my parents didn't fish and I never learned how.

Years later, I learned about the soot, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, carbon dioxide, mercury, and other heavy metals emitted by those power plants. I learned how heavy metals descend from the air into nearby bodies of water. Pollutants like mercury concentrate in the fish, making eating those fish harmful to your health. Then I was glad I never learned to fish.

Clean energy touches so many parts of our lives, like my family member with asthma, or my kids who will grow up in a world plagued by droughts due to climate change.

Affordable energy is vital to reducing poverty and helping all Marylanders achieve financial self-sufficiency. Rents are already so high and so many Marylanders already cannot afford their electric bills. I advocate for affordable housing and I volunteer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, because good housing policy and good climate policy overlap so much.

The PJM regional transmission organization is clearly central to any improvement. Given the years of backlog PJM currently faces, Maryland clearly needs to address the details of PJM and get the incentives right to make the clean energy flow. I have watched Delegate Charkoudian in particular this past year travel to conferences and become especially knowledgeable about the very complicated electric grid we share with other states. I trust her leadership and Senator Brooks' leadership on this. We need to trust our experts at a moment like this, with so much at stake.

To make Maryland energy cleaner and more affordable, we need to pass the Abundant Affordable Clean Energy Act.