



February 6, 2025

Hon. C.T. Wilson
Chair
Maryland House Economic Matters Committee
Rm 231 House Office Bldg.
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Brian M. Crosby
Vice Chair
Maryland House Economic Matters Committee
Rm 231 House Office Bldg.
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB398 Abundant Affordable Clean Energy Act

Dear Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

On behalf of the Land & Liberty Coalition of Maryland, of which I serve as State Director, I am writing to convey our support for HB398, the “Abundant Affordable Clean Energy Act.”

With chapters in 12 states, the Land & Liberty Coalition is a project of the 501c3 Conservative Energy Network. Unique in Maryland among the various advocates for clean energy, particularly utility scale solar, and a reliable modern grid, we are a decidedly right-leaning organization focusing on increasing our home-grown energy supply, bringing opportunity and revenue to landowners and their communities, and ensuring that ratepayer and taxpayer dollars are being used as effectively as possible.

There are immediate challenges in each of these areas: Maryland is facing an urgent need for affordable energy generated in-state; a state budget crisis and likely reduction in funds from Washington mean rural counties will also face funding shortfalls; and regrettably, at least \$150,000,000 from the SEIF is being diverted from its intended purpose of energy efficiency programs to the general fund to pay for others spending. The AACE Act is an important step in the right direction for addressing these current issues and avoiding them in the future.

Maryland’s Renewable Portfolio Standard is badly broken and needs an overhaul not only to meet clean energy goals but control skyrocketing energy costs and upgrade our grid. As it currently works, utility companies pay penalties in the form of Alternative Compliance Payments (ACPs) the costs of which are passed on to ratepayers, and the proceeds for which go into the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund or SEIF. Instead of funding energy efficiency and related programs, in the Governor’s proposed 2026 budget, a staggering \$150 million is diverted out of the SEIF into the general fund to plug holes in a



bloated budget. The AACE Act addresses this by reducing the reliance on ACPs in favor of set payments to the PSC to fund actual energy generation projects. This will help bring much need new cleaner power generation online and eliminate the future possibility that ratepayers will unwittingly be funding unrelated programs.

The Land & Liberty Coalition is particularly concerned about the status of the so-called solar carveout, requiring 14.5% of electricity to come from solar by 2030. The debate on solar power remains mired in 2009 when panels were inefficient and costly, requiring subsidies. This is now a mature industry that according to leading financial firms and government data utility scale ground-mounted solar is the most affordable and fastest to deploy source of energy available. And this is true even without subsidies, and it is true in all regions of the nation regardless of how much annual sunlight they receive.

Renewable energy champions and climate activists must recognize that the current legislation and thinking about the transition to cleaner energy is not working. Likewise, our fellow conservative es, some of whom remain renewable energy skeptics, would benefit from a fresh look at cleaner energy technology, its costs, and its benefits for smaller agricultural communities.

We also support the AACE Act's efforts to support the development of utility-scale energy storage systems, an important adjunct to low-cost solar power. The AACE Act also recognizes that nuclear power must be a part of our clean energy future and supports the recertification of Calvert Cliffs.

I thank the Committee for this opportunity to summarize our support for HB398 and look forward to working with the members and their staff on this and other matters.

Sincerely,

Adam Dubitsky

State Director