



SB0434 - UNFAVORABLE
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SB0434 – The ENERGIZE Act

Meeting of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 20, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on SB

Elders Climate Action is a nationwide organization devoted to ensuring that our children, grandchildren, and future generations have a world in which they can thrive. The Maryland Chapter has members across the state.

We applaud Governor Moore’s commitment to 100% clean energy by 2035, and we share that goal. Unfortunately, we have concerns about this bill that do not allow us to support it.

The energy situation in Maryland is a matter of great concern because of increasing demand for electricity from data centers and other uses and rising costs for ratepayers. But it also a very fluid situation. The number and size of data centers that may come to Maryland is unknown. Innovations like DeepSeek and improved demand management make their power needs difficult to estimate. A data center study such as the one proposed in SB0116, the Data Center Impact Analysis and Report, would help to clarify those issues.

Also, we are lacking a clear picture of what can be done to improve Maryland’s electrical system while meeting the essential goals we committed to in the Climate Solutions Now Act. Adding new nuclear energy to our grid is the most expensive

way to increase generation, and a nuclear plant that starts the planning process today may not be online by 2035. There are hopes that new small modular nuclear reactors will be less expensive and more quickly built, but none are yet in commercial use.

There are other options that need to be fully considered before we commit to new nuclear power in Maryland. Those include increased solar generation, increased storage, demand management, and virtual power plants.

A study like the one proposed in SB0909, the Energy Resource Adequacy and Planning Act, would be very helpful in clarifying the potential role of nuclear energy and other key issues in Maryland's energy future.

But we shouldn't wait for the study to begin to address these important issues. SB0316, the Abundant, Affordable, Clean Energy Act, offers a no-regrets strategy Maryland can pursue while doing further analysis and planning. The storage provisions and changes to SRECs are particularly important.

For all of these reasons, we urge an unfavorable report on SB0434.

Thank you.