



**Favorable With Amendments Testimony for
Empowering New Energy Resources and Green Initiatives
Toward a Zero-Emission (ENERGIZE) Maryland Act**

SB0434

Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

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Jamie DeMarco

Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund

Lobbyist

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, I urge a favorable amendments report on SB0434. The ENERGIZE Act will expand Maryland's ability to procure offshore wind which will bring additional union jobs to Maryland and reduce pollution. Offshore wind is key to Maryland's clean energy future. Once Maryland has 8.5 gigawatts of offshore wind spinning in the Atlantic those turbines will provide more electricity than all the coal and gas plants today combined provide. This legislation represents a significant step forward in Maryland's ability to build the offshore wind we need.

The nuclear procurement included in ENERGIZE includes ratepayer protections. The Public Service Commission would establish a cost cap on and is directed to ensure that no cost overruns are passed onto ratepayers. Projects would only be approved if they come under the cost caps set by the PSC, and ratepayers would not have to spend a single dollar on nuclear projects unless and until those projects start selling electricity to the grid.

If new nuclear energy can be built affordably, it should be deployed as a firm source of zero emission electricity. If nuclear energy proves too costly or complicated to deploy in a cost competitive way then Marylanders should not be on the hook to pick up the tab for a failed attempt to construct a plant. The ENERGIZE Act effectively provides ratepayer protection.

Most importantly, the promise of building new nuclear power must not be used as an excuse to slow down on our deployment of wind, solar, and batteries, all technologies that are commercially available today at scale and more affordable than coal or gas. The ENERGIZE Act sets up the policy infrastructure to build new nuclear projects if they can compete on costs, while also furthering the state's investments in clean, renewable energy.

While we applaud the lifting of the Offshore Wind Renewable Energy Credit cap, doing so would increase utility rates for customers. That increase should be offset by other policies to protect ratepayers. For those reasons we support amending the ratepayer protections included in



Senator Brooks' and Delegate Charkoudian's Abundant Affordable Clean Energy Act into the ENERGIZE Act, specifically the provisions that create a ratepayer protection Escrow account to be filled with solar ACP payments and 75% of the revenue from the energy franchise tax revenue from datacenters.

CONTACT
Jamie DeMarco, Lobbyist
jamie@demarcoavocacy.com, 443-845-5601

