



SB0434

Empowering New Energy Resources and Green Initiatives Toward a Zero-Emission (ENERGIZE) Maryland Act

Testimony before Education, Energy, and the Environment

Hearing February 20, 2025

Position: Unfavorable

Dear Chair Feldman and Co-Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 900+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **opposing SB0434**, which says it wants to reaffirm the states goal of achieving 100% clean electricity and address the current needs of reliable energy and the substantial increase in utility rates that many Marylanders have experienced this winter.

While this bill contains some important aspects, including increasing the amount of clean energy required starting in 2025 (from 35.5% from Tier 1 sources to 60.5%) and increasing each year, we do not believe the methods laid out in the bill will result in the impacts for which the State is aiming. For instance, it proposes to add nuclear energy to the renewable portfolio and build new nuclear energy projects, including small modular nuclear reactors, but from experience in other states this will take years and do nothing to address the needs of Marylanders now, as well as cost more than predicted. The Georgia Power Vogtle Units 3 and 4 took 15 years to build, and in the end cost twice what was projected (\$36.8 billion)ⁱ. In Utah, the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems NuScale Power small modular nuclear reactor was projected to cost \$3 billion, but rose to \$9.6 billion before the project was abandonedⁱⁱ. Finally, a study looking at the levelized capital costs of electricity production found that nuclear is three times the cost of solarⁱⁱⁱ.

In the end, it appears that this bill will pull focus and resources from cheaper and easier to implement renewable options, like wind and solar to invest in nuclear, which experience has shown often runs over budget and over time and would do nothing to help Marylanders struggling with paying their bills now.

For these reasons we respectfully urge an unfavorable report.

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ⁱ <https://thirdact.org/georgia/2024/06/09/plant-vogtle-the-true-cost-of-nuclear-power-in-the-u-s/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/nuscale-uamps-project-small-modular-nuclear-reactor-ramanasmr-/705717/>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.lazard.com/media/xemfey0k/lazards-lcoeplus-june-2024-_vf.pdf