



HB1532: Continuing the Next Generation Energy Act

Position: Favorable with Amendments

March 3, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
Cc: Members of the Committee

Chair Korman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Economic Action Maryland Fund urges a favorable report on HB1532, which advances a suite of energy reforms. We do encourage the committee to consider some strengthening amendments.

As the members of this committee are painfully aware, energy rates have risen dramatically in recent years due to a variety of factors. Thousands of Marylanders each year face shutoff notices due to nonpayment, while many others are forced to juggle multi-hundred-dollar utility bills alongside the ever-increasing costs of rent, groceries, and other necessities. In fact, when Economic Action Maryland Fund surveyed our members and other stakeholders this winter, 63% stated utility bills were their primary concern.

We understand that lowering energy prices will take a multi-pronged approach over a number of years. Many of the proposals in HB1532 would help lower rates long-term, but there are areas that could be strengthened. In particular, we encourage the committee to consider:

- Multi-year rates have contributed to rising delivery costs and are not benefitting consumers. We appreciate the language strengthening the provisions around the reconciliation process for multi-year rates but encourage the committee to consider prohibiting multi-year rates entirely moving forward.
- EmPOWER is a critical tool to deliver meaningful cost savings to low-income Marylanders. Energy efficiency can provide timely, up front savings to struggling households. We appreciate and fully support the creation of a third-party administrator to improve efficiency and outreach for this program. However, we believe that the cost-effectiveness language should be focused on the utility companies running their programs in a more cost-effective manner, not restricting the specific tools that can be deployed through the program.
- We are concerned that the expansion of nuclear power is not a cost-effective solution for Marylanders.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB1532 with strengthening amendments.

Sincerely, Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Deputy Director

Economic Action (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) champions economic rights and housing justice through advocacy, research, consumer education, and direct service. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

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