



WESTERN MARYLAND CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

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The Honorable Dereck Davis, Chair and
Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

Opposition Testimony for: HB98

Madam Chair and members of the committee, I want to thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **opposition to HB98**, titled "*Electricity - Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Qualifying Biomass.*"

My name is George Koontz and I am President of the Western Maryland Central Labor Council of the Maryland State & D.C. AFL-CIO. Our jurisdiction is Allegany and Garrett counties in Western Maryland.

Our affiliates members work in all areas of employment and are represented by dozens of different labor organizations. Many of the affiliates had members who were employed by the Verso Paper Mill, which was shuttered in June of 2019. The result was many union members and others losing their employment.

We understand there are other employers in the paper industry looking at the plant for possible purchase. If this bill passes it may diminish the viability of an agreement being made for such a purchase.

This would be a devastating blow to the thousands of unemployed in the county who lost their jobs when the Mill closed. Many of them are eagerly awaiting a new buyer to again employ the workforce that once occupied this facility. They haven't given up this hope and we would ask that you all don't give up on them.

On behalf of the Western Maryland Central Labor Council and all our affiliates we urge your committee to give an unfavorable report to HB98.

Sincerely,

President WMCLC