Committee: Finance
Testimony on: HB0351 – "Utility Regulation - Consideration of Climate and Labor" Position: Support
Hearing Date: February 25, 2020

I strongly support House Bill #351 which would require the Public Service Commission (PSC) to include climate change as one of the several environmental and public policy factors considered in regulating electricity generation in Maryland.

The State of Maryland has existing expertise to provide climate-related analyses required in SB 656 / HB 531 as demonstrated in the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) launch of their Climate Leadership Academy.

Maryland recently celebrated the graduation of the first class of climate change officers. The DNR administers the Maryland Climate Leadership Academy, a state program developed in partnership with the Association of Climate Change Officers (ACCO).

"Our goal is to equip leaders and Maryland's workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to meet the challenges of climate change, flooding and severe weather," said DNR Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio.

"The Academy was established to specifically offer training and continuing education for state and local government officials on the matter of climate change."
https://www.thebaynet.com/articles/0220/department-of-natural-resources-honors-marylands-first-classof-climate-change-professionals.html

Graduates know how to access existing toolkits utilizing all the federal information available to state and local officials to develop projections for sea-level rise, rainfall, and temperature changes that would affect local resources, for example.

Graduates learned about IPCC **Representative Concentration Pathways**, which are trajectories of greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations, not emissions, used in climate modeling and research to describe climate futures that are possible but differ depending on the volume of GHG emissions in selected time periods. These are used in the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report in 2014.

Graduates were introduced to the basics of GHG accounting, risk assessments, setting and management of GHG reduction goals, economic and legal implications of climate policies, reporting requirements, health implications, and the food/water/energy nexus. These concepts are applicable to both business and government operations and should inform regulatory approaches.

Examples of relevant curriculum from the ACCO catalog:
GHG-101: Basics of GHG Accounting, Reporting & Disclosing GHG Emissions
GHG-102: Fundamentals of the Energy, Water & Food Nexus

GHG-201: Establishing GHG Reduction Goals & Management Structures
https://climateofficers.org/coursecatalog

Additionally, planning for land use and potential adverse outcomes was addressed from the perspective of potential liability for uses contraindicated by available analyses of climate impacts (e.g., planners of buildings and roads; realtors).

Conclusion

Because of the State of Maryland's considerable expertise in evaluating climate change and the commitment to reducing GHG emissions, I urge a favorable report on this legislation to require the PSC to consider climate change in discharging its regulatory duties.

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