

Committee: Economic Matters

Testimony on: HB 1545

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: March 5, 2020

My name is Dave Arndt, I am a resident of Montgomery county. Coal-fired plants do basically 4 things: Produce electricity, employ a limited amount of people, produce harmful emissions, and produce greenhouse gasses.

It has been shown that our current grid has excess capacity and that as new renewable energy sources come on line, we will not need coal-fired plants for emergencies¹.

Even though many occupations get phase-out, we do not as a society work to find transitional occupations for the worker. However, this legislation would create a worker and community transition fund, thus going way beyond what we normally do when job is obsoleted.

We know that coal-fired plants pump out toxic and dangerous pollution like lead, mercury, selenium, smog-forming nitrogen oxides, and acid rain-causing sulfur pollution. And this effect thousands of Marylanders as well as our environment. We spend millions of dollars to clean the Bay yet we support one of its largest sources of pollution. This does not make financial sense

Finally, in 2017 Maryland's 6 coal-fired plants, were responsible for over 75% of the dangerous climate disrupting pollution from in-state electricity generators, but produced less than 14% of the state's gross electricity consumed². These coal plants are the #2 source of Maryland's in-state climate pollution. In the end, climate change is the biggest threat to Maryland.

Worldwide CO₂ levels are at over 407ppm. In fact, the last time the atmospheric CO₂ amounts were this high was more than 3 million years ago, when temperature was 2°–3°C (3.6°–5.4°F) higher than during the pre-industrial era, and sea level was 15–25 meters (50–80 feet) higher than today.³ The unfortunately fact is that the CO₂ level has risen faster than the sea level can rise, but the rise is coming if we just stay with our status quo. Say goodbye to the Eastern shore, Southern Maryland, and cities like Annapolis. When you grand children ask you what you did to prevent climate change, you can be ether an enabler or a preventer. Do you part and support this bill.

Best Regards,

Dave Arndt

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¹ <https://www.pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/teac/20140109/20140109-reliability-analysis-update.ashx>

² Based on data from the US Energy Information Administration's Electric Power Monthly reports and the Maryland Department of the Environment's 2017 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

³ <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-atmospheric-carbon-dioxide>