



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
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**Senator Chris West and Delegate Benjamin Brooks' joint statement on GenOn Support for Legislation and Corresponding Required Retirement of Morgantown Coal Plant**

ANNAPOLIS, MD - Today, GenOn Holdings, Inc. announced that the company has reached an agreement to support proposed legislation that would accelerate Maryland's transition from coal-fired electric generating resources, and would correspondingly cease burning coal at its Morgantown power plant in Charles County, Maryland by no later than 2027. This announcement follows the company's earlier actions this year to retire the coal units at the Dickerson power plant in Montgomery County and the coal units at the Chalk Point power plant in Prince George's County. With their support for the legislation, GenOn is committing to move completely beyond coal in Maryland in the coming years.

The announcement from GenOn caps a historic year in Maryland's energy sector. As recently as April 2020, Maryland was home to six coal-fired power plants, none of which had firm plans to stop burning our country's dirtiest fossil fuel. However, with this announcement from GenOn, a remarkable 95% of Maryland's coal power plant capacity has been deactivated or announced for retirement in the coming years. Only the Warrior Run power plant in Allegany County, owned by AES Corporation, remains without a public commitment to stop burning coal.

Maryland is on the precipice of joining other climate action-leading states that have firm commitments to move entirely off coal. In November 2020, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change called on the Maryland General Assembly to pass legislation that sets a firm timeline for Maryland to move beyond coal in the power sector by no later than 2030 and to establish new programs to support impacted workers and communities.

As a continuation of a 2020 legislative proposal and in an effort to implement the Commission on Climate Change's recommendation, Maryland state Senator Chris West (R) and Delegate Ben Brooks (D) have pre-filed legislation for the 2021 legislative session in Maryland to address coal-fired power plants. The bipartisan legislation confirms the company's timelines for moving beyond coal at Maryland's power plants, requires the Warrior Run plant to stop burning coal at the conclusion of its existing power purchase agreement in 2030, establishes new programs to better support impacted workers and communities, and embarks the state on a longer fossil fuel transition planning process. The legislation is co-sponsored by Senator Brian Feldman (D) and Delegate Kumar Barve (D).

**Senator West issued the following statement in response to GenOn’s announcement:**

“The movement off coal at the Morgantown power plant in Charles County is a welcome win for our air, water, climate and lungs -- especially as we are battling a global respiratory pandemic. We are glad to see GenOn providing a timeline for this shift in their operations at the plant and will be sure our legislation reflects this commitment from the plant owners. Now comes the time for those of us in the General Assembly to work together, and with Governor Hogan, to make sure we pass this legislation and provide support for any impacted workers and investing in communities that have historically borne the highest burden of coal pollution.”

**Delegate Brooks issued the following statement in response to GenOn’s announcement:**

“GenOn’s plans to retire two of its coal units earlier this year made our legislation all the more urgent to codify Maryland’s transition off coal in the power sector and to establish workforce and community transition programs. We welcome their support for this critical policy. Policymakers in the General Assembly have a responsibility to ratepayers and workers to ensure decisions that impact our energy reliability, economy, and environment are not just in corporate boardrooms. Moving beyond coal is also urgent as COVID-19’s disproportionate impact on our black and brown communities highlights racial health inequities that ring true in our energy systems as well. Race – even more than class – is the number one indicator for the placement of toxic facilities in this country. I look forward to working with our colleagues, industry leaders, labor unions, environmental groups, and leadership from impacted counties to pass legislation in 2021.”