



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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HB 569 – Energy Generation, Transmission, and Storage Projects – Required Community Benefit Agreement and Labor Standards House Economic Matters Committee February 24, 2022

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 569 – Energy Generation, Transmission, and Storage Projects – Required Community Benefit Agreement and Labor Standards. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

As we move from a traditional energy economy to a clean energy economy it is vital that we are creating a policy and regulatory framework that ensures we are bolstering family-sustaining careers and not just creating dead-end jobs. When labor unions talk about supporting legislation that simultaneously fights climate change and protects jobs, we are specifically talking about legislation like HB 569.

Renewable energy generation, transmission, and storage are the energy growth industries of the future. For these projects it is paramount that we apply labor standards like Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) and building them using Prevailing Wage. We must hold these new energy jobs to a high standard now, ensuring that we are setting up the next generation of workers to be as successful as the ones that precede them. HB 569 demands PLAs and Prevailing Wage and it also adds Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) to the requirements of these projects, making sure that the local community is engaged and that at least 80% of the craft workers on the project are locally hired.

We need to fight climate change and we need to create family-sustaining careers in clean energy. With HB 569 we have the opportunity to protect workers and their families, as we grow clean energy production in Maryland.

We urge a favorable vote on HB 569.