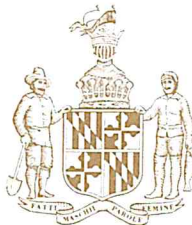


DR. JAY JALISI
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Subcommittees
Local Government and Bi-County
Agencies
Natural Resources, Agriculture,
and Open Space



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Delegate Dr. Jay Jalisi
Before the Economic Matters Committee**

**In Support of HB-781
Gas and Electric Companies – Deposit Charges and Termination of Service
March 3, 2022, 1:00 pm**

Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I come before you today to introduce a bill that potentially affects every individual in Maryland who may not have sufficient economic means, may have been adversely financially affected by COVID-19, or may otherwise have temporary difficulty in paying the gas and electric bills in a timely fashion. It is especially beneficial for senior citizens living on fixed income from losing their gas and electric connections for lack of funds to pay a deposit, if their bills are paid up in full.

Under COMAR regulation 20.30.02.04 a utility company can ask for a deposit as much as equal to 2-month bill amount of an existing customer if the bill payment is late just twice within a 12-month period.

My bill, HB-781, prohibits a gas company or an electric company from requiring a deposit from a current customer who is age 65 or older and has an annual income at or below 175% of the federal poverty level. It will also prohibit a gas company or electric company from terminating gas or electric service to such a customer for failure to pay all or part of a deposit if the customer pays when due all current charges for gas or electricity delivered and consumed.

I believe that under the current economic climate, when we are still suffering from the economic impact of COVID-19, this bill is very much needed, and so I request this Committee for a favorable vote on HB-781.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Jalisi'.

Delegate Dr. Jay Jalisi