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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**BILL:** House Bill 1331 - Coal Ash-Use, Recycling, and Management  
(Coal Ash Recycling Act of 2022)

**COMMITTEE:** House Environment and Transportation

**DATE:** March 11, 2022

**POSITION:** Letter of Information

Upon review of House Bill 1331 Coal Ash - Use, Recycling, and Management, the Maryland Department of General Services (DGS) provides these comments for your consideration.

Coal Ash is defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as: “Coal ash, also referred to as coal combustion residuals or CCRs, is produced primarily from the burning of coal in coal-fired power plants. Coal ash includes a number of by-products produced from burning coal, including fly ash, bottom ash, boiler slag, and flue gas desulfurization material”.

This bill requires coal ash be used in the creation of certain construction materials in the State. It also charges DGS, in coordination with the Department of the Environment (MDE), to construct, operate, and maintain a coal ash disposal facility in the State. The associated costs for this facility are estimated to be almost \$1.2 million by 2026.

The incorporation of coal ash into construction materials may have multiple impacts on the State, DGS, and the public. Concrete made with coal ash may be more expensive than other concrete blends, thus potentially increasing the cost of construction materials. Coal ash concrete is weaker than other blends and would require more product to be purchased to achieve the necessary strength equivalent for construction while consideration must also be given to the potential health concerns posed by the use of coal ash.

While DGS is required, in coordination with MDE, to construct and operate a coal ash disposal and recycling facility it lacks the specialized expertise necessary to do so. DGS would incur additional costs to staff an estimated 10 new positions with the necessary expertise for the design, construction, and operation of such a facility.

For additional information, contact Ellen Robertson at 410-260-2908.

