



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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Testimony of Larry Stafford, Jr., Executive Director of Progressive Maryland

SB 418 – Energy Generation, Transmission, and Storage Projects – Required Community Benefit Agreement and Labor Standards February 15, 2022

Position: Favorable

Thank you, Chair Kelley and distinguished members of the Senate Finance Committee, for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB 418.

My name is Larry Stafford, and I am the Executive Director of Progressive Maryland. We are a statewide grassroots nonprofit with over 100,000 members, supporters, and affiliates who live in nearly every legislative district across Maryland. Our multi-racial, multi-issue organization is dedicated to building power for working people and ending all forms of structural oppression.

We at Progressive Maryland support SB 418, a measure that would establish strong labor standards for energy generation projects. Environmental justice is a key issue area for our organization, and we have been heavily involved with the push toward a green economy at both the state and federal levels. As Maryland shifts away from its reliance on fossil fuels, it is critical to ensure the roles created by this transition are quality jobs with strong benefits and meaningful worker protections.

SB 418 establishes some of the conditions for an economically just transition by requiring developers to pay workers prevailing wage rates on the construction of energy generation projects that require a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN). This legislation also requires developers to demonstrate best efforts to enter into agreements with the communities affected by their projects that prioritize jobs for local residents and businesses, offer career training opportunities, and implement safety protocols.

Many states have already passed legislation to establish labor standards on energy projects — these include Illinois, Connecticut, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington, Minnesota, and New York. Now is the time for Maryland to join these other progressive states.

We urge the Committee to vote favorably on SB 418 and move the legislation as soon as possible. Thank you for considering our support for this urgent and important bill.

Larry Stafford, Jr.
Executive Director
Progressive Maryland