

**Testimony in Support of the POWER Act
HB 0793
Economic Matters Committee
March 6, 2023**

I am writing on behalf of myself to urge a favorable report on HB0793

Hello, my name is Dave Arndt, a resident of Baltimore MD, an environmental advocate, a chemical engineer and former Director of product and Marketing at BP Solar.

At stake isn't just the electricity mix—it's the future of life as we know it on our planet. We do have time to prevent a climate disaster, however we must act quickly and make sure that every action that people do to support climate change mitigation is valid and not some greenwashing activity. The last time CO2 levels were this high, the sea level was 60 feet higher. It is a good thing that sea level rise lags CO2 levels, otherwise the whole eastern shore of Maryland would be gone. I urge a favorable report on HB0793.

Building more offshore wind in Maryland will bring not only jobs, but careers to Maryland, lower energy costs, improve health outcomes and slash our carbon pollution. That is why HB 0793, The POWER Act sets Maryland up to be a leader in offshore wind by making necessary upgrades to our grid, setting an ambitious goal of 8.5 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2031, strengthening labor standards, and building another gigawatt of offshore wind in existing lease areas.

Right now, offshore wind developers are looking up and down the east coast for where they should invest, and Maryland does not look competitive. While New Jersey has set a goal of 11.5 gigawatts of offshore wind and New York has set a goal of 9 gigawatts, Maryland only currently plans to build 2 gigawatts of offshore wind. Our grid lacks the capability of handling large additions of offshore wind, and we currently have no plan to create that capability. Our state could become a central hub of offshore wind development up and down the east coast, but not without additional action. By passing the POWER Act we can put Maryland back in the running as a location worthy of offshore wind development and investment. Let's Lead MD!

Maryland is currently building 2 gigawatts of offshore wind, and even this relatively small buildout has resulted in commitments to provide \$3.5 billion in economic benefits for the state, 7,000 job years of work¹, and the revival of union steel jobs in Baltimore County. The POWER Act would bring even more jobs to Maryland by immediately increasing the number of offshore wind turbines being built in the near-term and making the necessary investments to grow this industry in the long term.

¹<https://chesapeakeclimate.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/MD-Offshore-Wind-Report-Dec-2022-Gabel-Associates.pdf>

The POWER Act would also lower energy costs by initiating a planning process for shared offshore wind transmission infrastructure. A recent Brattle report found that by initiating a long term, coordinated transmission planning process New Jersey saved its ratepayers \$900 million.² That is exactly the kind of cost savings The POWER Act would bring for Maryland ratepayers.

8.5 gigawatts of offshore wind would be enough energy to power every home in Maryland and would not create any air pollution. Building these turbines will improve health outcomes for all Marylanders, but will disproportionately benefit people of color in Maryland.

The POWER Act is thoughtful, effective policy that will create union jobs, lower energy costs, improve health outcomes, and help Maryland meet our climate targets. It will help attract new investments from developers who are looking to see which states will be leaders in offshore wind energy. I urge a favorable report.

Dave Arndt
Baltimore Md.

²<https://www.marylandmatters.org/2023/01/30/offshore-wind-will-need-major-investments-in-transmission-supply-chain-reports-say/>