HB1186 – Public Service Companies - Annual Report on Votes Cast at Meetings of Regional Transmission Organizations

Testimony before

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 28, 2023

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mdm. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Richard Deutschmann, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County.   We are providing written testimony today in **_support of HB1186_**, to bring greater transparency to electric utility involvement with Regional Transmission Organizations. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Del. Charkoudian for sponsoring this important legislation.

The electric utility companies in Maryland – PEPCO, BG&E, First Energy & Delmarva Power, all belong to decision-making bodies within the largest of the Regional Transmission Organizations – the PJM.   Decisions that are made at the PJM directly affect Maryland, our ratepayers, and our climate goals.   Up to this point, these votes that are taken at the PJM are done behind closed doors, with no voting record of how these entities are influencing this body.   As a result, fossil fuel power plants are operating for longer periods than may be necessary, and the development and interconnection of clean energy across the region has been slowed.

This bill will improve accountability and transparency, by requiring Maryland utilities to disclose every vote that they take at the PJM, to the Maryland Public Service Commission.   This will ensure that our utilities are voting in the best interest of Marylanders, and will be held to greater account before our elected bodies if they are voting against our interests.   This is an excellent bill, and will help to speed up our transition to clean energy across the region.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.

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