



TO: Members, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: Paul Pinsky - Director, MEA
SUBJECT: SB 719 - Public Safety - State Fuel Security Program
DATE: February 21, 2023

MEA Position: FAVORABLE

This departmental bill addresses a recent and significant energy delivery issue that made national headlines; the closure of the Colonial Pipeline due to cybersecurity threats. **The bill will significantly reduce the financial and life-threatening hardships that can develop in cases of fuel shortages, making Maryland and her citizens more resilient in emergency situations.**

The proposed legislation will reinstate in statute The Maryland Energy Administration's (MEA's) ability, in the case of an emergency, to mitigate the impact of a severe fuel shortage for oil, gasoline, heating oil, and propane by utilizing a security program; reserving a percentage or a set volume of in-state fuel inventory to meet emergency needs for first responders, as well as certain industries (such as electricity generation, freight, mail delivery, and fuel for home heating).

Currently, some states fail to include in their emergency plans or contingencies, measures to address petroleum shortages, including meeting priority needs for petroleum and other liquid fuels in either statute or within an energy assurance plan. Recognizing this oversight, states are beginning to prioritize emergency fuel planning as they pursue policy updates. It is prudent for Maryland to do the same.

MEA learned from the Colonial Pipeline shutdown that trucking alone cannot be relied upon for fuel delivery in the case of a sustained or larger emergency scenario. By enshrining the ability to address fuel supply disruptions in statute, Maryland can enhance its response strategies while promoting energy continuity and resilience during a state of emergency.

For the forgoing reasons, MEA is asking the committee for an **FAVORABLE** report.