



Maryland

Energy Administration

TO: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: HB 579 - Critical Infrastructure Streamlining Act of 2024
DATE: February 22, 2024

MEA Position: FAVORABLE

This bill would exempt certain emergency backup power infrastructure from the definition of a generating station. This would remove barriers to the growth of the information technology infrastructure industry in the state.

MEA supports the intent of this legislation. Modern industries require constant access to electrical power. Interruption of energy to critical infrastructure can have significant impacts including putting lives or national security at risk as other critical infrastructure, such as police, fire, hospitals, and military installations, is so heavily reliant upon this modern industry. By defining backup generating stations and exempting them from the certificate of public convenience and necessity, it is more likely that modern industries will continue to look to Maryland to invest, and it will place the state in a more competitive position in comparison to neighboring jurisdictions that have had success in recruiting growth within the technology sector.

MEA would note, and imperatively so, that these backup generating stations will continue to be subject to the Maryland Department of the Environment air permitting process, as well as any local government permitting processes. This supplies the local jurisdictions and individuals most impacted by the installation of modern industry to have meaningful input, and largely within their own jurisdiction.

For these reasons, MEA urges the committee to issue a **favorable report**.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Landon Fahrig, Legislative Liaison, directly (landon.fahrig@maryland.gov, 410.931.1537).