



HB0267 - Electricity and Gas - Retail Supply Regulation and Consumer Protection
Testimony before
House Economics Matters Committee
February 15, 2024
Position: Favorable

Dear Economic Matters Committee members,

My name is Peter Alexander and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **in support of HB0267**, which begins to regulate electrical energy supply. This bill sets new requirements for supplier contracts, requires licensing of energy salespersons, allows investor-owned utilities to market standard offer service (SOS), and more. We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Crosby in sponsoring this legislation.

Common sense regulation of this industry is long overdue. The environmental community was told that supporting third party providers who provide “green energy” plans, would result in the creation of more renewable energy in the U.S., if not in Maryland. In fact, we now know that this rarely occurs. And the whole RECs system is very opaque to the public. It is virtually impossible for the average person to find a third-party provider whose RECs create new truly renewable energy. Additionally, in Maryland the facts show that third party providers have swarmed to this state with poorly trained and duplicitous salespeople targeting low-income neighborhoods and the elderly with offers that are in the long term far more expensive than SOS, enticing many to switch.

We learned from SOS & retail rate data sourced from the Department of Energy’s EIA 861 files (<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/eia861/>) that Maryland customers who switch paid an average of \$500 over SOS, the second highest rate in the US.

This bill is an important step in stopping exploitation of Marylanders in the name of “CHOICE”. There is no real choice when consumers cannot access the complete and accurate data. Please untie the hands of Maryland agencies like the Public Service Commission and the Office of the People’s Counsel to protect the best interests of Marylanders.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Peter Alexander, PhD
Woodbine, MD