

TESTIMONY OF HERBERT JONES – MEMBER OF THE SOUTH COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COALITION (SCEJC) BEFORE ECONOMICS MATTER COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY DELEGATE C.T. WILSON

HB 1367 “PUBLIC UTILITIES; CERTIFICATION OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE & NECESSITY ENERGY STORAGE DEVICES OVER 1 MEGAWATT

FEBRUARY 29, 2024 2 1PM

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIRMAN WILSON, MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, RESIDENTS AND HOMEOWNERS OF MARYLAND. MY NAME IS HERBERT JONES AND AS A MEMBER OF THE SOUTH COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COALITION I GIVE MY FULL SUPPORT TO DELEGATE VALDERRAMA AND HER LEADERSHIP IN THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS MUCH NEEDED LEGISLATION.

BY WAY OF BACKGROUND THE (SCEJC) HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A MAJOR BATTLE WITH PEPSCO ON A PROPOSED 1 MEGAWATT BATTERY STORAGE SYSTEM TO BE LOCATED IN A HIGHLY POPULATED SIVERSE COMMUNITY. WE ARE HAPPY TO REPORT WITH THE HELP OF THE STATE NAACP, CONGRESSMAN IVY, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE PSC AND THE ENTIRE 26TH LEGISLATIVE TEAM WILL WERE SUCCESSFUL IM HAVING THE UTILITY LOOK INTO ANOTHER LOCATION.

WE ALL KNOW ENVIRONMENTAL INEQUITIES ARE REAL WHEN IT COMES TO COMMUNITIES OF COLOR AND LOW INCOME AREA’S. YOU ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, ARE THERE COUNTY AGENCIES THAT CAN BOTH SELF EVALUATE THE SAFETY AND POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF NEW UTILITY BATTERY RELATED TECHNOLOGY? THE ANSWER IN PRINCE GOERGES COUNTY IS NOT AT THE MOMENT.

I STONGLY SUPPORT HB 1367 AS ESTABLISHING ONE SET OF GUIDELINES THAT WILL TAKE INTO ACOOUNT THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND PERHAPS APPROPRIATE SITTING GUARD RAILS TO MAKE SURE THE PUBLIC INTEREST IS TAKING INTO ACCOUNT. WHAT BETTER STATE AGENCY TO DO THAT OTHER THEN THE MARYLAND PUBLC SERVICE COMMISSION THAT HAS BOTH THE KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES TO DO SO AND AREADY HAVE A PRETTY BROAD MANDATE TO OVERSEE ALL UTIL;ITY RELATED MATTERS.

IN CLOSING I ASK EACH OF YOU TO SUPPORT THIS LEGISLATION THAT WILL MAKE SURE THE APPROPRIATE RREGULATORY APPROVALS ARE GRANTED .