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February 22, 2024

Chairman C.T. Wilson  
House Economic Matters Committee  
Room 231  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: HB 579 (Critical Infrastructure Streamlining Act of 2024) – SUPPORT**

Chairman Wilson,

I am writing to you on behalf of TidalHealth, a key healthcare provider serving the Eastern Shore communities of Maryland, to express our strong support for the Critical Infrastructure Streamlining Act of 2024 (HB 579), introduced as part of the Governor's legislative package for this year.

TidalHealth recognizes the importance of maintaining uninterrupted healthcare services, especially during power outages. Our facility relies on an on-site backup electricity generation system to ensure critical healthcare operations continue without disruption, safeguarding patient care and safety. The proposed bill, by providing an exemption from the requirement to obtain a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) for emergency backup electricity generators, directly supports our mission to deliver continuous, high-quality healthcare services.

The decision by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) in October 2023, which denied a CPCN exemption for a data center developer to install backup generators, underscores the urgent need for legislative clarity and reform. This decision, which deviates from decades of PSC precedent and imposes retroactive requirements on facilities with backup generators larger than 2 MW, creates unnecessary uncertainty and potential operational challenges for large electricity users, including healthcare providers like TidalHealth.

HB 579 is a necessary step towards ensuring that Maryland's critical infrastructure, including hospitals, data centers, and other essential services, can maintain operational resilience in the face of power outages. By clarifying the law and reversing the PSC's

recent decision, this bill will provide much-needed certainty and support for organizations that rely on backup generators to protect public health and safety.

TidalHealth supports this crucial issue and is grateful for the opportunity to advocate for a proposal that so directly benefits our operations and the communities we serve. Please let us know how we can further assist in the passage of this important piece of legislation.

Thank you for your attention and for considering our support for the Critical Infrastructure Streamlining Act of 2024. We are ready to provide any additional information or assistance as needed.