

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0861
“High-Energy-Use Facilities - Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Reductions”

Education, Energy, and the Environment

March 7, 2024

Dear Mr. Chair and Committee Members:

Hello, my name is Dave Arndt, a resident of Baltimore MD, a Climate, Environmental and Social Justice advocate, a chemical engineer, a former Director for BP Solar in Frederick MD and retiree of The National Institutes of Health. Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB0861. I urge you to vote favorably on SB0861.

Data centers are the foundation of the internet and our modern IT infrastructure. In light of future growth in data centers, including “hyperscale” data centers to support new technologies like AI and bit coin operations, Maryland faces significant challenges in managing this new industry while pursuing its goals towards protecting public health, resource sustainability and reducing climate emissions. In the same manner, cultivating cannabis is also a very high energy intensive use operation that presents issues that complicate and perhaps prevent us from achieving our Green House Gas (GHG) emission goals.

Maryland simply cannot meet its goals when we are looking at facilities that can use as much power as the City of Baltimore. It only makes sense that these facilities become partners with the state of Maryland to achieve our goals together. The way to structure this partnership is to establish limits of GHG emission for these facilities. This way the high emitters of GHG are paying their fair share and we, Maryland residents, are not subsidizing these industries while we make our own investments in clean energy.

SB0861 represents a common-sense approach to managing data centers by imposing yearly goals that can readily be achieved with current technologies which put the onus of climate pollution on the organization responsible for GHG emissions.

For all of these reasons, I strongly support SB0861 and urge a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.