



HoCoClimateAction.org
Howard County, Maryland



SB0935 : Renewable Natural Gas Pilot Program - Establishment
Hearing Date: March 4, 2024
Bill Sponsor: Senator Gallion
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Submitting: Howard County Climate Action and Indivisible Howard County
Position: Unfavorable

Dear Chair Feldman and Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, our names are Liz Feighner and Peter Alexander, and we represent [HoCo Climate Action](#), a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization with approximately 1,400 subscribers and [Indivisible Howard County](#) representing 750+ members, respectively. Both organizations are active members of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We strongly urge an **unfavorable report on SB0935**, which authorizes the Department of General Services to enter into a contract to procure renewable 'natural' gas (RNG).

RNG is the new clean coal and a cynical red herring. With RNG, the gas industry can claim to lower carbon emissions while continuing to burn dirty fuels. "[In reality, this is just a greenwashed, cleaner sounding name for biomethane, or processed biogas that can be delivered in pipelines.](#)" The only possible use might be for on-site and hard-to-electrify sectors, such as aviation or long-distance transportation.

As the gas industry faces declines in sales because of efforts to curb climate pollution, the industry is [scrambling to preserve its future](#). The gas industry has embraced RNG as its lifeline. By securing RNG legislation and requirements, it will be able to expand gas infrastructure, [keep customers locked in to gas, and create a new faux "green" business model](#).

RNG is (1) limited in supply and scalability, (2) very costly, (3) detrimental to the environment and air quality, especially for frontline communities, and (4) in some cases, can end up increasing GHG emissions. RNG encourages the continued buildout of leaky gas infrastructure that locks in climate chaos. Research indicates that replacing fossil fuels with RNG is "[not likely to be commercially feasible without large subsidies](#)."

It is ludicrous to require the Department of General Services to establish an RNG pilot program in order to procure highly expensive renewable "natural" gas (RNG), especially given many other budget demands for the state and taxpayers. It is extremely wasteful to subsidize this false solution when we could be using funds for truly clean energy, such as solar, wind and geothermal.

For these reasons, we urge **an unfavorable report of SB0935**.

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