



Testimony SB0474- Critical Infrastructure Streamlining Act of 2024

Position: OPPOSED

February 22, 2024

My name is Sonia Demiray, I am the co-founder of the Climate Communications Coalition, a member of the Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition, and a resident of Frederick County.

The Public Service Commission (“PSC”) was established in 1910 to regulate, amongst other categories: electric utilities, gas utilities, in addition to the construction of generating stations. It does not, in this definition, exclude generating stations that would be used for backup power or testing. To remove the PSC from its legal oversight of generator systems of any size is for this reason unacceptable. The PSC’s charge includes collecting and maintaining records and reports of any public service company, review plans for service, inspect equipment, audit financial records, handle consumer complaints, and promulgate and enforce rules and regulations. If we remove the PSC from the oversight of generating systems that have the potential of enormous pollution, what recourse will Marylanders have?

Worse, to remove backup generation of any size from Maryland’s environmental laws and environmental goals during a worsening climate crisis, is a big mistake. Marylanders are already suffering from climate change and aberrant weather patterns including flooding and extreme heat. While it is key to reduce the effects of existing pollution by protecting natural Carbon Capture and Storage Systems, such as our mature forests, it is even more important to refrain from putting into place new sources of emissions and additional pollution. Nobody should have the right to circumvent, or even sabotage, this enormous effort that we, as a Maryland Community and beyond, are engaging in.

Companies that wish to get established in Maryland today, should be required to provide plans on how they generate enough energy to conduct their business with 100% clean generation means – which, to be clear, includes solar, wind, and geothermal.

Thank you.

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