

Testimony on hb1296 as amended (Senate Hearing).pd

Uploaded by: Debbie Cohn

Position: FAV

Committee: Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
Testimony on: HB1296 as amended - Electricity-Offshore Wind Projects – Alterations
Submitting: Deborah A. Cohn
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 29, 2024

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony today in strong support of HB1296 as amended.

The Problem: Offshore wind presents a significant opportunity for Maryland to decarbonize its electricity sector while supporting an important opportunity for Maryland to recharge economic growth and jobs. The offshore wind industry, however, has been experiencing some growing pains. High inflation rates, high interest rates (which are particularly challenging in industries requiring high upfront capital investment) and large increases in demand for inputs as a result of Europe’s attempt to wean itself from Russian gas supplies have challenged offshore wind projects all along the East Coast. Projects in [Massachusetts](#), [New York](#) and [New Jersey](#) have all faced economic problems, with each state developing solutions to reflect its commitment to offshore wind. At this stage, flexibility is important – flexibility which HB1296 provides.

The Comptroller’s [State of the Economy report](#) shows that despite many positive economic indicators in Maryland, “Maryland’s economic growth effectively stalled in 2017 and...has been stagnant ever since. “From between the fourth quarter of 2016 to the first quarter of 2023, Maryland’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP)...has grown 1.6%, compared with 13.9% for the entire U.S. during the same period.” Maryland must do better. But we need to grow this economy wisely, consistent with our other goals, based on our strengths and in industries that can provide significant and sustainable long-term economic benefits.

By at least one [estimate](#) offshore wind energy along the East Coast could generate enough electricity to equal current electricity generation, entirely eliminating the need for fossil fuel based electric generation. Maryland alone might be able to generate more than one-third of its electricity demand with offshore wind, with neighboring states potentially producing much higher amounts. Given Maryland’s deep water ports, interstate highways and good apprenticeship programs, Maryland can compete to be the primary location in the Mid-Atlantic to serve as a supply chain hub for the offshore wind industry. The potential of offshore wind as an economic driver for Maryland is thus significant.

With the passage of the POWER Act last year, Maryland is considered a leader in adopting policies supportive of growth of the offshore wind industry. We need to sustain these supportive policies and a strong pipeline of projects in order to secure for Maryland the opportunity to become an East Coast supply chain hub and benefit from the economic growth and job opportunities offshore wind can provide, whether at Sparrows Point or elsewhere in Maryland. Just at the Sparrows Point Steel Mill alone, state policies to sustain our offshore wind pipeline could create over 1,000 construction jobs plus long-term manufacturing jobs for 500 steelworkers.

Wind projects offshore Maryland are facing the challenging conditions affecting other East Coast offshore wind projects. While some Maryland projects may need to adapt, interest by existing companies remains strong and several companies not currently developing wind projects offshore Maryland are interested in bidding for new lease areas that BOEM may offer.

The Solution: HB1296 would open new Round 1 and Round 2 offshore wind project proceedings to keep Maryland on track to achieve its offshore wind goals while maintaining existing ratepayer protections and firm caps on ratepayer impact. It creates the opportunity for offshore wind companies to apply for ORECs that are now available and provides these projects and companies the flexibility to increase their project size, maximize use of existing lease areas, and align their pricing and schedules to reflect recent market challenges. The new proceedings could provide an additional 500 megawatts, for a total of 1600 megawatts, just allowing full development of U.S. Wind's existing lease area. The bill also directs the Governor, the PSC and relevant state agencies to develop a plan for achieving 8,500 MW of offshore wind capacity by 2031.

HB1296 confirms Maryland's favorable regulatory framework and sends a strong signal to both the offshore wind industry and related Maryland industries that Maryland is serious about its goal of 8,500MW of offshore wind capacity and of being a supply chain hub for the East Coast offshore wind industry. HB1296 is good for economic growth, good jobs, and Maryland's future as a fully decarbonized economy.

Accordingly, I urge a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee on HB1296.

Thank you.

Deborah A. Cohn

HB 1321. Senate Support Letter_.pdf

Uploaded by: Debra Davis

Position: FAV



CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*
Ralph E. Patterson, II, M.A., *Vice President*
Gilbert O. Bowling, III
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

Mark Belton
County Administrator

March 21, 2024

Bill: HOUSE BILL 1321 - Land Use – Southern Maryland Code Counties – Subdivision Regulations – Property Dedication and Fee
Committee: Senate – Education, Energy, and the Environment/Budget & Taxation
Position: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the County Commissioners for Charles County, this letter is to express support for HB 1321 – Land Use – Southern Maryland Code Counties – Subdivision Regulations – Property Dedication and Fee. HB 1321 was requested by the County Commissioners at the request of our Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism.

HB 1321 allows Charles County to incorporate dedication of real property for recreation, or the payment of a fee to be used by the County for the purchase, development, and improvement of real property for recreational facilities in its subdivision regulations. As written, HB 1321 applies to all code home rule counties in the Southern Maryland class, however, Charles County is the only code home rule county in its class.

Currently, Charles County requires developers of residential communities meeting certain criteria to include recreation amenities within their subdivisions. The recreation amenity is maintained by a common ownership organization (i.e. homeowners’ associations), as the property owner upon which the amenity is located. As such, the quality of the amenity and its upkeep varies greatly from neighborhood to neighborhood. We believe a more global approach to the requirement for recreation amenities should be considered as part of the subdivision regulations. HB 1321 enables the County to amend our local subdivision regulations to allow for dedication of land to the County or a fee- in-lieu of the dedication to the County. With the passage of HB 1321, we will have the ability to aggregate fees for use in developing recreational opportunities to serve the community, and consider the needs of the region beyond what is possible in current the program. Similar regulations are already found in at least two other Maryland jurisdictions: Baltimore County and Prince George’s County.

For the reasons stated herein, we encourage a FAVORABLE report on HB 1321. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support.

Sincerely,

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President
County Commissioners of Charles County

cc: Charles County Delegation

HB1321 - Senate - Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Debra Davis

Position: FAV

SENATOR ARTHUR ELLIS
SENATE CHAIR

SENATOR MICHAEL A. JACKSON



DELEGATE DEBRA M. DAVIS
HOUSE CHAIR

DELEGATE KEVIN M. HARRIS
DELEGATE EDITH J. PATTERSON
DELEGATE C. T. WILSON

THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
CHARLES COUNTY DELEGATION

March 20th, 2024

Chairman Brian J. Feldman.
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB1321 Land Use – Southern Maryland Code Counties – Subdivision Regulations –
Property Dedication Fee

Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

We respectfully request a favorable report on HB 1321 Land Use – Southern Maryland Code Counties – Subdivision Regulations –Property Dedication and Fee. This is a Charles County delegation bill with unanimous support from the Charles County Board of Commissioners and the Charles County House and Senate Delegations.

If there are any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at x337.

With gratitude and service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debra Davis'.

Delegate Debra Davis
District 28
Chair, Charles County Delegation

HB 1321. Senate Support Letter .pdf

Uploaded by: Reuben Collins

Position: FAV



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For the reasons stated herein, we encourage a FAVORABLE report on HB 1321. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support.

Sincerely,

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President
County Commissioners of Charles County

cc: Charles County Delegation