1000 Maine Avenue, SW| Suite 700 | Washington, DC 20024 | www.washingtongas.com

TESTIMONY
WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY
EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

FEBRUARY 8, 2024

HOUSE BILL 437

Washington Gas respectfully submits this statement in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 437, *Maryland Zero Emission Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Council - Membership* (HB 437).

Washington Gas proudly provides safe, reliable natural gas service to more than 1.2 million customers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Washington Gas has been providing energy to residential, commercial, government, and industrial customers for more than 175 years.

Washington Gas supports HB 437 with amendments that would add a representative from one of Maryland's investor-owned natural gas utilities to the Maryland Zero Emission Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Council ("ZEEVIC"). The inclusion of a natural gas utility on the ZEEVIC would provide an important perspective on the role gaseous zero-emission fuels and technologies, such as hydrogen and fuel cell electric vehicles ("FCEV"), can play in decarbonizing the State's transportation sector.

FCEVs can be the best option for many vehicle owners and vehicle types, including:

- heavy-duty transportation, where battery weight, cost, and range can impact payloads;
- high vehicle utilization use cases where charging may not be sufficiently fast;
- regions where grid costs for fast charging (or fleet charging) may be prohibitively high; or;
- customers who seek a similar driving and fueling experience to a traditional gasoline- or diesel-fueled vehicle, including long ranges and fast refueling times.

The Maryland Department of the Environment has stated the need to ensure the availability of hydrogen fuel and the necessary infrastructure to serve FCEV fleets in the State. MDE notes in their Climate Pollution Reduction Plan that technologies that increase hydrogen fuel availability will be important components to successful transit fleet conversions in Maryland, especially for zero-emission transit buses. MDE estimates that meeting the anticipated need for electric and

hydrogen refueling infrastructure installation and maintenance costs in Maryland will cost $2.1 billion from 2027-2040.[1]

The Maryland Department of Transportation has a stated objective to support the widespread adoption of alternative fuels and build out the State's alternative fuel corridor, for which hydrogen vehicles and refueling infrastructure will be a key component.[2]

FCEVs are attractive from an energy systems perspective, complementing BEVs and reducing the strain on the electric grid. Decarbonizing the economy will require significant expansions of renewable electricity generation and electric transmission and distribution infrastructure. A sole focus on all-electric solutions for transportation fails to recognize the benefits of leveraging both electron and molecule-based pathways to serve that energy demand.

Washington Gas hopes to continue working with the sponsor and the committee and urges the committee to support HB 437 with the amendments that would add a representative from one of Maryland's investor-owned natural gas utilities to the ZEEVIC.

Thank you for consideration of this information, and I am available for any questions or additional information.

CONTACT:
Manny Geraldo, State Government Relations and Public Policy Manager
M 202.924.4511 | manuel.geraldo@washgas.com

[1] MDE. 2023 Advanced Clean Trucks Fact Sheet (Jun. 12, 2023).

[2] MDOT. 2050 Maryland Transportation Plan (Jan. 2024).