



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the
Economic Matters Committee
on
House Bill 505
February 21, 2025
as Comment

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to advocate for right stewardship of the commons. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a faith community with three judicatories located in every part of our State.

Our community's commitment to clean energy has been on the public record in Maryland for decades.

The constellation of utility privatization in 1999 with its concomitant loss of in-state regulatory and planning authority, the outsourcing of infrastructure planning to commercial actors where the interest lies with shareholders and not ratepayers, and a quarter-century change in populations and economics, has produced a deleterious set of implacables that this MGA session now has to confront. We understand all that and acknowledge that solutions for climate catastrophe and utility infrastructure and service are narrowed-to-vanishing.

"I told you so" is not a useful service for the common good. But something does need to be said so that it can be recognized: subcontracting the public good to private interests with monopolistic authorization—there is a reason utilities began as "public"—has failed in this sector. Maryland, and this MGA session, is not alone in being a prime illustration.

Nuclear energy is "clean" energy if and only if you subtract its lethal wastes from its inventory. Nuclear waste remains lethal on a geologic timeline.

Calvert Cliffs is a first-generation reactor. Deadly waste has been stored at its site for generations ever after. Site storage space is disappearing. This is not new information.

Nuclear waste management by law cannot be addressed by the State. There is no national policy plan for what to do with it. There is presently no plan for policy planning for how to store, transport, secure, and dispose of it. What is being done with **House Bill 505**, after all the "all of the above" rhetoric, is that Maryland ratepayers are financing another commercial project to keep the lights on at the expense of their safety and welfare. You'll also be requiring them to finance yet one more private interest authorized to hold the common good hostage through their influence over public decision-making.

And that is how Maryland got here. And it needs to be said in public and that is what we are doing.

Lee Hudson