

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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Councilwoman Phylicia R. L. Porter,
District 10
CHAIR:
Public Health and Environment
MEMBER:
Labor and Workforce
Public Safety
Transportation and Land Use

February 19, 2025

Bill Title: HB1406 CHERISH Our Communities Act
Position: Favorable
To: Chair C.T. Wilson, House Economic Matters Committee

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,

As a Councilwoman, representing Baltimore City's Tenth District I am writing to express my strong support of HB1406, which will provide important, targeted environmental health protections for the communities in Maryland most overburdened by pollution.

HB1406 fills important gaps in how Maryland considers applications for Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to ensure that polluting energy-generating facilities aren't increasingly concentrated in communities in Maryland already overburdened by pollution. For polluting energy-generating projects (excluding wind, solar, and geothermal, with Delegate Behler's clarifying sponsor amendments) proposed in and around the most polluted 25% of census tracts in Maryland (as determined by MDE's Maryland EJ Screen), HB1406 requires extra information from the permit applicant and requires the PSC to consider whether the project will increase the pollution burden on the surrounding community as part of their review process. If the project will cause or contribute to disproportionate public health impacts on already-overburdened communities, HB1406 says the PSC will deny the project or issue a conditional CPCN with provisions that will protect public health and provide benefits to the community.

As a public health scientist and local elected official, I know the key public health challenges and harms that my communities face daily. It is my hope that my written testimony serves as an indicator of the courage, preservation, and duty as a legislator to ensure that our communities are healthy for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phylicia R. L. Porter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Councilwoman Phylicia Porter, MPH, MSL - District 10
Phylicia.Porter@baltimorecity.gov