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January 23, 2025

Support: HB 121 - Utility Transparency and Accountability Act

Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV **supports HB 121 - Utility Transparency and Accountability Act**, and we thank Delegate Charkoudian for her leadership on this issue.

This bill is straightforward: electric utilities in Maryland will submit an annual report to the PSC to disclose the votes they make at our regional transmission organization, PJM. Decisions that PJM makes significantly impact Maryland ratepayers, and our ability to reach our climate goals (i.e. through advancement of clean energy and energy storage solutions). As such, these decisions must be transparent.

PJM decisions are informed by member (utility) votes, including through various work groups. Votes from utilities at PJM lead to, for example, determinations about whether new transmission is needed as a result of power plant closures. Recent PJM decisions about its capacity market calculations caused an [800% increase](#) in system-wide prices for 2025/26 compared to the prior year's auction. Certain high-level votes are disclosed, but the working groups, committees, and task force votes are not. We need to know how Maryland utilities are voting to make sure these decisions are working towards state climate goals, and to the benefit of Maryland ratepayers. As the Maryland Office of the People's Council wrote in testimony on a similar bill last year, "this report, "will provide important transparency on whether the utilities' positions support the least-cost solutions to potential reliability issues with the regional grid or more expensive transmission solutions."

Lack of transparency is not unique to Maryland, but Maryland is part of the solution. Virginia and Indiana, within PJM, have introduced similar transparency measures, reinforcing this need.

PJM and state utility resources and decisions are critical to support a clean energy future and a healthier environment for everyone in Maryland. Maryland LCV urges a **favorable report** on this important bill.