

HB1035/SB937 - UNFAVORABLE

Eric Wurzbacher

wurzy2@gmail.com 301-233-0889

**HB1035/SB937- Public Utilities, Electricity Generation Planning -
Procurement, Permitting, and Co-Location
(Next Generation Energy Act)**

**Joint Meeting of Education, Energy and the Environment Committee and the Economic
Matters Committee
February 28th, 2025**

Chair Feldman, Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Kagan, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment and Economic Matters Committees,

On behalf of CCAN, I urge an unfavorable report on HB1035/SB937, the Next Generation Energy Act.

I currently work as a volunteer with Chesapeake Climate Action Network, and so write on the behalf of CCAN. For over the past 50 years, I've supplemented my life-long STEM knowledge bases with those of the many climate change and energy disciplines. I bring that to this letter.

Thirty years in our District 20 Silver Spring home, I write also on behalf of our two children, 16 nieces and nephews, and six grand- nieces and nephews, the oldest of whom is six years old.

This legislation would allow the construction of new gas plants Maryland makes little practical sense, even the shortest term. It won't lower high utility bills because of how long it takes to get a new plant up and running. Such plants may take years before they are creating energy that's distributable to the public. Clean energy alternatives -- batteries and solar especially -- can be online faster and far more cost-effectively, If the goal is to lower our energy bills, a new gas plant is not the most effective strategy.

Moreover, the cost of building the type of gas plant approved in this bill is equal to roughly \$1,000/kilowatt of energy produced. This could end up costing our state \$3 billion dollars: that is far too expensive an investment to make with no immediate relief on utility bills.

In addition, the disruptive and often destructive effects of climate change can only, and will only, accelerate.

Any new gas plant would work against reaching Maryland's climate goals set forth in the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022: primarily, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2031. Governor Moore issued an executive order last spring to create a framework to reach 100% clean energy by 2035. To get to either goal, the state should be investing first and foremost in clean and renewable sustainable energy, *not* allowing for any fossil fuel provisions.

And let's not forget the resulting cumulative pollution from such a plant: it would wreak havoc on the quality of our air and watershed resources on which our economic welfare *and* the health of all Marylanders depends. Most vulnerable? Those of us who live in overburdened and underserved communities, who are already facing the unequal effects of climate change and fossil fuel pollution.

The routine greenhouse gas – methane leakage among them -- and particulate emissions that will be produced by a new gas plant? These could increase Maryland residents' chances of asthma, pulmonary and cardiovascular diseases, strokes... And premature deaths.

This is hardly paying attention to the future we all will share. We the people of Maryland deserve to keep our lights on and appliances running without putting our health and climate at risk.

I respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB1035/SB937.