



**The Maryland Department of the Environment**  
**Secretary Serena McIlwain**

***House Bill 419 - Natural Gas - Strategic Infrastructure Development and  
Enhancement (Ratepayer Protection Act)***

**Position:** Support  
**Committee:** Economic Matters Committee  
**Date:** February 6, 2025  
**From:** Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

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The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** HB 419.

**Bill Summary**

House Bill 419 would amend the purpose of the Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement (STRIDE) law, originally passed in 2013, to provide gas infrastructure improvements when appropriate to ensure the safety of a gas system and to be consistent with State Climate Policy. HB 419 would also require gas companies to submit additional information to the Public Service Commission (PSC) in proposed gas infrastructure replacement plans, including relating to public risk and cost effectiveness, and add additional criteria necessary for PSC approval.

**Position Rationale**

Overall, MDE is supportive of modifying the STRIDE program to better align with State climate requirements, including reaching 60% emissions reductions by 2031 compared to 2006 levels and continuing on a path to net-zero emissions by 2045, all while aiming to mitigate ratepayer impacts. By ensuring consistency amongst state policy, Maryland will be better positioned to consider long-term environmental, financial, and energy impacts in a way that is aligned with protecting public health and global climate impacts. HB 419 also aligns with recommendations made by both the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, outlined in its Annual Report for 2023, and the Building Energy Transition Implementation Task Force in 2024.

Accordingly, MDE asks for a **FAVORABLE** report for HB 419.

**Contact:** Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations  
Cell: 240-548-3321, Email: [jeremy.baker@maryland.gov](mailto:jeremy.baker@maryland.gov)