

Testimony Opposing HB1035
House Economic Matters Committee
February 28, 2025

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of Baltimore City and a person of faith concerned about public and environmental health, I am writing to express my opposition to HB1035, the Next Generation Energy Act.

Lowering electricity rates is a top goal in Maryland. I support achieving that goal through increased investments in solar power, utility-scale batteries, energy efficiency, and smart-grid technology. Hard data shows these efforts are faster, cheaper, and better for the environment and human health than a proposal to build a large new gas plant in the state.

I appreciate that the stated intent of this bill is to “encourage the development of clean-carbon-free nuclear power, including development through innovative designs.” The issue is the definition of “dispatchable energy generation.” If it were more specific to nuclear power, this would be a responsible bill. However, it leaves open the door for natural gas, and future subsections provide explicit provisions for natural gas plants, making clear the expectation that natural gas companies will provide some – likely up to the quota – of the requested dispatchable energy generation.

Likewise, I appreciate the provision to convert natural gas stations to hydrogen or zero-emissions biofuel when feasible, but it is more responsible to wait until those fuels are feasible and build those plants then. The potential for decades of burning natural gas in a new plant until the Commission deems it feasible to switch fuels is the wrong choice for Maryland.

As you are aware, Maryland and the US need to continually increase the renewable energy portion of our energy portfolio, not build new fossil fuel-burning infrastructure. This bill is a step in the wrong direction and will lock us into natural gas for decades to come.

I urge you to return an unfavorable report on HB1035. Thank you for your time and work.

Regards,
Katie Little
881 W Lombard St Baltimore, MD 21201