



The County Commissioners of Kent County
Ronald H. Fithian, President | Albert H. Nickerson, Member | John F. Price, Member
Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator | Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney

February 25, 2025

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland State Senate
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable CT Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
231 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Public Utilities – Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act) -
Letter of Opposition

Chair Feldman and Chair Wilson,

Please accept this letter as part of the testimony submitted for your public review of the Renewable Energy Certainty Act, as set forth in 2025 Senate Bill 931 and House Bill 1036.

Kent County, in agreement with our County colleagues and MACo, opposes this legislation.

The bill as presented creates (1) serious, unaddressed questions surrounding the safety of new battery storage facilities; (2) leaves the local community outside the regular processes of negotiating “good neighbor” screening and siting uses appropriate for adjacent business and residential neighbors; (3) denies the community important new revenues from the growth of industrial uses, which is an important source of revenue for Kent County; (4) siting solar in areas with already constructed water and wastewater facilities planned for new housing, which then go underutilized, raising both operational costs as well as opportunity costs; and (5) a forced fit of large, intensive land uses without careful review to include other Maryland priorities for Bay-friendly, environmental protection, conservation, and green infrastructure could be disruptive to important accomplishments and wasteful of limited resources.

Kent County is concerned that implementation of this bill, as presented, will (1) undermine the Maryland property rights of surrounding neighbors who rely on local zoning; (2) increase local taxes unfairly, since an important, major, new industrial use will be exempted from local taxes while expecting local, volunteer fire departments to provide new, unfunded fire protection services and specialized equipment; (3) endanger members of the public due to the risk of serious, locally unmanageable battery fires; and (4) create a preferred class of Wall Street-funded businesses that will deleteriously impact local Main Street businesses.

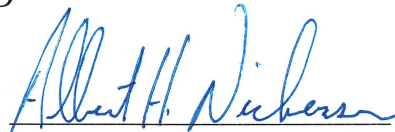
While we oppose the legislation as drafted, Kent County, like all Maryland counties, remains committed to being the State's partner in government and working alongside the General Assembly to achieve better outcomes for our shared constituents. We support the set of amendments proposed by MACo as an amicable way forward in our partnership.

Please consider our concerns as we look forward to partnering in finding a path forward.

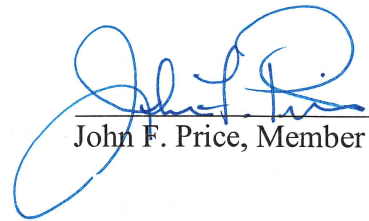
Sincerely,
THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND



Ronald H. Fithian, President



Albert H. Nickerson, Member



John F. Price, Member

cc: Governor Westley W. Moore
The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist