



Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

**HB960 – Investor–Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies –
Cost Recovery – Limitations and Reporting Requirements
(Ratepayer Freedom Act)**

Economic Matters Committee

Position: Favorable

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Greetings Chairman C.T. Wilson, Vice Chairman Brian Crosby and members of the Economic Matters Committee

My name is Paul Verchinski. I am testifying for the nonprofit Howard County Citizens Association (HCCA). Founded in 1961, HCCA testifies regarding proposed legislation affecting the residents of Howard County and the State of Maryland. This written testimony has been authorized by the HCCA Board. Our website can be found at <https://howardcountyhcca.org>.

Favorable

The Howard County Citizens Association requests a Favorable report on HB960 for the following reasons:

1. Utility consumers of electricity and gas should not have to pay for Investor Owned Utility lobbying and political activities. (Four out of five electrical utilities in Maryland and seven gas utilities are IOUs.) These activities do not benefit utility consumers but generally advance the interests and economic returns of their shareholders
2. Utility lobbying has generally been against new Maryland legislation seeking to reduce Green House Gases such as the Climate Solutions Now Act. Utilities get their monopoly power from Maryland yet work against seminal legislation desired by citizens in Maryland.

We ask that the committee report out the bill Favorably.

Paul Verchinski
HCCA Board Member
PO Box 89
Ellicott City, MD 21041