

Testimony in Support of HB1406

HB1406 strengthens Maryland's Public Utilities law by ensuring that applications for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) include rigorous environmental and public health reviews. This bill is crucial for preventing harmful projects like the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) from proceeding without accountability.

By requiring a **Comprehensive Environmental Impact Analysis**, an **Existing Burden Report**, and **increased public transparency**, HB1406 ensures that:

- Developers fully assess **short- and long-term environmental damage** before approval.
- Communities already facing pollution and health risks **are not subjected to further harm**.
- **Public engagement is prioritized**, with environmental reports shared with local officials and residents.
- The **Public Service Commission (PSC) has stronger oversight**, preventing approvals that worsen conditions for vulnerable areas.

For MPRP, HB1406 would create **new hurdles for approval**, including:

- Requiring developers to prove their project **will not harm public health or ecosystems**.
- Blocking approval if the Existing Burden Report shows the area already faces significant environmental stress.
- **Holding developers accountable** by requiring mitigation funds for unavoidable negative impacts.
- **Protecting private property** by limiting eminent domain abuse, ensuring projects serve public interest—not corporate profits.

Beyond MPRP, HB1406 sets a **critical precedent** for responsible energy development in Maryland by:

- Enforcing **stricter environmental and public health protections**.
- Preventing the **disproportionate impact** of infrastructure projects on already burdened communities.
- Requiring **genuine regulatory scrutiny** rather than automatic approvals.

- **Mandating community engagement** and mitigation before projects move forward.

HB1406 is a necessary step toward **environmentally just and community-centered energy policy**. I urge you to support this bill to ensure future projects are held to the highest standards of accountability and sustainability. Marylanders need to be protected from out of state corporations seizing their land, will you vote to protect Marylanders?

Respectfully,

Brenda Myers