



HB 398 - SUPPORT
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HB 398
Abundant, Affordable, Clean Energy Act (AACE)

Meeting of the Economic Matters Committee

February 6, 2025

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today. On behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on HB 398.

Each day, we see the climate crisis more clearly. We know that Maryland is at risk for sea level rise, flooding from intense rainfall, heat waves, and other extreme weather events. Maryland can also be a leader in moving us to a safer, cleaner future where we all can thrive. The clean energy transition is an essential part of that future.

Marylanders are also concerned about the rising cost of living, and particularly, about rising energy costs. In 2023, approximately [400,000 Maryland households](#) were paying more than six percent of their income for energy bills. Energy costs are particularly a problem for low-income households and people with fixed incomes, many of whom are elders.

Passage of the AACE Act would lead to multiple benefits for Maryland.

- Provide abundant energy by increasing energy generation and storage in Maryland
- Increase clean energy by bringing more wind and solar projects online
- Enhance grid reliability by creating a market for battery storage, improving financing for solar projects and transmission for offshore wind energy
- Ensure that the Calvert Cliffs nuclear facility is able to meet its 2034 and 2036 relicensing obligations and remain online
- Create new family-supporting local jobs
- Keep energy affordable by making procurement of clean energy more competitive and efficient and improving Maryland's supplier diversity and energy independence

- Protect ratepayers using funds from the RPS's Alternative Compliance Payments and state energy use and franchise tax generated from data centers

This bill draws on the experience of other states who are facing similar issues and provides a no-regrets strategy for dealing with a changing and uncertain landscape. We strongly urge a favorable report.