CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS Legislative District 37B Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot, and Wicomico Counties

Economic Matters Committee

Subcommittees Banking, Consumer Protection, and Commercial Law Business Regulation Property and Casualty Insurance Public Utilities

> *Chair* Eastern Shore Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<u>HB1417</u> <u>Department of General Services - Clean Energy Procurement Program -</u> Establishment

• Why is the Bill being introduced?

As we navigate our current energy crisis in Maryland and prepare for an impending increase in energy use, it is critical that we maximize our ability to generate clean homegrown energy in our state. The legislation before you today is a logical next step in developing this homegrown energy source.

• What does the Bill do?

This bill will establish a Clean Energy Procurement Program within the Department of General Services (DGS). This pilot program has two key objectives:

- First, it enables DGS to collaborate with other agencies and partners to develop a process for procuring a percentage of renewable natural gas (RNG or biogas) as part of their fossil-derived natural gas purchases.
- Second, it facilitates an environmental impact study—conducted by the University of Maryland—to assess the advantages of biogas over nonrenewable natural gas.

Why is it important to pass now?

Biogas is a vital component of a comprehensive clean energy strategy. Beyond its promise as a renewable energy source, anaerobic digestion technology also addresses critical agricultural challenges. Digesters can process not only animal manure but also animal processing residues, such as <u>dissolved air flotation (DAF) waste</u>. They extract and clean water for beneficial reuse, such as crop irrigation, and neutralize harmful pathogens in the solids—eliminating odor and reducing food sources for black flies and other pests. The remaining byproduct serves as an excellent natural fertilizer, enhancing soil health and crop growth. Most importantly, anaerobic digesters capture methane, preventing its release into the atmosphere and converting it into biogas. The establishment of a Clean Energy Procurement Program represents a significant step forward in promoting biogas use in Maryland, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting a more sustainable energy future.