

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

My name is Aaron Knishkowsky and I am a volunteer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. I am testifying today in opposition to HB1035, which would open the door to a new gas power plant being built in Maryland.

I can appreciate the fact that lowering the cost of electricity is an important goal this legislative session. I understand that increasing energy production is important for keeping Maryland competitive in attracting new businesses that create jobs and drive economic growth

However, it is essential that we achieve this goal through increased investments in solar power, utility-scale batteries, energy efficiency, and smart-grid technology. Hard data shows these efforts are faster, cheaper, and better for the environment and human health than a proposal to build a large new gas plant in the state.

I did a significant amount of organizing around this bill over the last few weeks. Dozens of Marylanders I spoke with were shocked that the MGA is considering a NEW fossil fuel plant when we've worked so hard to retire outdated, polluting ones. They were even more outraged when they learned that the plant would likely rely on fracked gas, a practice that was wisely banned by this body.

Put simply, a new gas power plant would be expensive to ratepayers, dangerous to nearby communities, and a misuse of state dollars. It would make Maryland's important climate goals significantly harder to reach, and the economic, public health, and environmental harm caused by the plant's carbon emissions would be measured in the hundreds of millions of dollars each year.

Thank you, and I urge an unfavorable report.