



# PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION NO. 5

UNITED ASSOCIATION OF JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES OF THE PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING INDUSTRY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO

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## TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY OF TERRIEA "T" SMALLS, BUSINESS MANAGER AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY  
TREASURER, UA PLUMBERS & GASFITTERS LOCAL 5

HB900 - ELECTRICITY - DATA CENTERS - RATE SCHEDULE AND REQUIREMENTS  
BEFORE THE HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Chair Wilson and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

On behalf of the hardworking union members of UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5, including more than 1,900 members and 400 apprentices and their families, I urge this committee to reject HB 900. This bill undermines opportunities for job growth in our industry, discourages long-term investment in Maryland's energy infrastructure, and ultimately threatens the livelihoods of skilled tradespeople across the state.

Our members take pride in their role building and maintaining the systems that keep Maryland running—whether it's ensuring clean water access, modernizing energy infrastructure, or supporting the development of data centers that drive economic progress. HB 900, however, would make it more difficult for Maryland to compete with neighboring states for projects that create stable, middle-class jobs.

Data centers are more than just tech hubs—they generate steady, well-paying jobs for union tradespeople who construct, maintain, and service their complex mechanical and plumbing systems. These facilities require extensive pipefitting, gas systems, and HVAC work, providing ongoing opportunities for our members.

Across the Mid-Atlantic, other states have recognized the value of data centers in attracting investment, spurring infrastructure improvements, and strengthening local economies. Yet, HB 900 puts Maryland at a disadvantage by creating additional regulatory hurdles for an industry that is already helping drive clean energy expansion.

For example:

- **Data centers increase demand for clean power**, making investments in reliable energy sources—such as nuclear and other carbon-free generation—more viable.
- **Workforce opportunities grow** when major infrastructure projects move forward, benefiting tradespeople, suppliers, and local businesses.
- **Regulatory uncertainty drives investment elsewhere**, making it harder for Maryland workers to benefit from these opportunities.

**Terriea "T" L. Smalls**  
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Business Rep. and Organizer

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By discouraging the growth of this sector, HB 900 sends a message that Maryland is closed for business—while states like Pennsylvania and Virginia actively court these projects. Rather than addressing a real problem, HB 900 targets a single industry with burdensome new regulations that could have unintended consequences for energy policy and workforce development.

- **Maryland's existing energy oversight works**—the Public Service Commission and PJM Interconnection already ensure grid stability and fair pricing.
- **This bill creates uncertainty for energy agreements**, which are essential for businesses planning large-scale investments.
- **Blocking data center growth does not strengthen Maryland's economy**—it weakens it by pushing critical jobs and projects out of state.

If Maryland wants to be a leader in economic development and clean energy job creation, it should be encouraging industries that drive demand for reliable power and infrastructure—not making them more difficult to build.

At UA Local 5, we are committed to securing high-quality, family-sustaining jobs for our members. When legislation threatens work opportunities, we speak up. HB 900 risks disrupting an emerging sector that has provided steady employment for skilled union trades across multiple industries, including plumbing, gas fitting, and mechanical construction.

Rather than enacting unnecessary barriers, Maryland should be advancing policies that support both clean energy development and union jobs. That means:

- Encouraging projects that utilize skilled labor
- Ensuring fair wages and benefits through responsible contracting policies
- Promoting investment in long-term infrastructure that sustains careers in the trades

HB 900 runs counter to these goals, which is why we strongly urge an unfavorable report on this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Terriea "T" Smalls  
Business Manager & Financial Secretary Treasurer  
UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5

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