



TESTIMONY FOR HB0960

Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Cost Recovery – Limitations and Reporting Requirements (Ratepayer Freedom Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Johnson

Committee: Economic Matters

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0960 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

HB0960 prevents investor-owned electric, gas, and gas and electric companies from recovering certain costs through rates, including costs associated with lobbying and political activities. These costs can unfairly burden ratepayers, who end up paying for activities that may not directly benefit them.

HB0960 also requires these companies to include certain costs related to these activities in their annual reports to the Public Service Commission. This ensures transparency and accountability in how these companies allocate their funds.

The benefits to Marylanders include increased transparency and fairness in utility billing. By prohibiting the recovery of lobbying and political activity costs through rates, the bill ensures that ratepayers are not unfairly burdened with these expenses. Additionally, the requirement for companies to report these costs promotes accountability and allows for better oversight by the Public Service Commission.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.