

**Committee: Education, Energy, and Environment**  
**Testimony on: HB1035 - Next Generation Energy Act**  
**Submitting: Karl Held**  
**Position: UNFAVORABLE**  
**Hearing Date: February 28, 2025**

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing my testimony today on HB1035. I am concerned about the provisions for building a gas-burning power plant that fast tracks the construction of a projected three GW facility.

The solutions proposed in HB1035 will not result in greater energy reliability in the timeframe needed and will likely increase rather than result in lower electric rates in Maryland. Construction of this gas power plant would cost an estimated 3 billion dollars that would have to be shared by Maryland ratepayers. In addition, the serious and ongoing impacts of climate change can best be mitigated by cheaper, faster, and safer alternatives to gas.

Also, gas generating plants are massive undertakings, even when they are renovating a pre-existing coal plant, and can take upwards of seven years to complete. In 2023, the Virginia utility Dominion proposed building a new gas plant at the location of an existing coal plant, originally promising completion by 2026. Now they say it won't be operational until at least 2030.

A recently commissioned report by Google to assess the least expensive way to meet new electricity demand found that building a new gas power plant is more expensive than zero-emission alternatives, including building new utility scale batteries with a virtual power plant.

Despite some good strides in Maryland clean energy in the past, authorizing construction of a massive gas plant in the 2020's, in a world of rapid global warming, will leave a horrible climate legacy for this General Assembly. You have done as much good as any statehouse to pass climate bills like the Clean Energy Jobs Act and the Climate Solutions Now Act to help lower the cost of solar energy and battery technology, making them cheaper alternatives to the large gas plant proposed in HB1035.

If lawmakers are serious about lowering electricity bills and helping Maryland ratepayers, they should abandon talk of building a large and harmful gas plant. There may be more expeditious and lower cost solutions, such as those proposed in SB316 the Abundant Affordable Clean Energy Act

For these reasons, I respectfully urge an **UNFAVORABLE** report in Committee.