

Maureen Wambui

7827 Rolling View Ave, Nottingham, MD, 21236

Maureen.w.m.2030@gmail.com

03/04/2025

The Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee

Maryland General Assembly, Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony Response on SB0816 with Recommended Amendments - Public Service Commission  
- Membership – Alterations

Hearing Date: March 06, 2025

Chairperson and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Subject: Response on SB0816 with recommendations – Public Service Commission Membership  
– Regional Representation and Expansion

My name is Maureen Wambui, and I am a proud Immigrant, Parent, Community advocate and resident of Legislative District 8 in Maryland. I appreciate the opportunity to testify to SB0816, a bill that seeks to expand the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) and ensure regional representation. While I support the bill's intent to create a more geographically diverse PSC, I urge this committee to consider amendments that would ensure racial, ethnic, and immigrant communities are adequately represented in this expansion.

The PSC plays a critical role in regulating utilities and transportation—issues that disproportionately impact immigrant and low-income communities. Immigrants in Maryland, many of whom are essential workers and small business owners, often face challenges such as unaffordable energy bills, language barriers when dealing with service providers, and transportation gaps in underserved areas. However, SB0816 focuses solely on geographic representation without guaranteeing that the commission reflects the state's racial, ethnic, and economic diversity.

I respectfully propose the following amendments to SB0816:

1. **Diversity Requirement:** Include language ensuring that at least one PSC commissioner comes from an immigrant or minority background or has demonstrated experience working with these communities.

2. **Community Engagement Mandate:** Require the PSC to hold regular listening sessions with immigrant and minority communities to address unique challenges related to utilities and transportation.
3. **Language Accessibility Commitment:** Mandate that PSC communications, including notices and public hearings, be available in multiple languages spoken by Maryland's diverse communities.

Expanding the PSC is a step in the right direction, but representation must go beyond geography. It must reflect the diversity of Maryland's people to ensure that policies are equitable and inclusive for all residents, including immigrants and people of color.

I urge the committee to amend SB0816 to guarantee that diverse communities have a seat at the table, ensuring fair and just utility policies for all Marylanders.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Wambui