



TESTIMONY OF AARON BAST, BUSINESS MANAGER AND FINANCIAL
SECRETARY TREASURER, IRON WORKERS LOCAL 5

BEFORE THE HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE AND THE SENATE
EDUCATION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

IN OPPOSITION TO HB 270 / SB 116 – DATA CENTER STUDY BILL

Dear Chairs Wilson and Feldman, and honorary members of the House Economic Matters Committee and the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee:

I am Aaron Bast, Business Manager and Financial Secretary Treasurer of Iron Workers Local 5. Our union represents over 1,200 highly skilled ironworkers who contribute to major infrastructure projects across Maryland. We are proud to be part of the state's economic engine, supporting safe and reliable construction projects that provide family-sustaining wages and benefits to our members. I am here today to express our strong opposition to HB 270 / SB 116.

This legislation threatens to impede the development of crucial infrastructure projects, particularly the proposed hyperscale data center at Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant. This \$7 billion investment has the potential to create thousands of high-quality union jobs, from construction to long-term maintenance and operations. The passage of this bill would introduce unnecessary delays and regulatory uncertainties that could discourage investors and jeopardize these opportunities.

Our members have the expertise and training to deliver complex projects safely and efficiently. We work under stringent regulations to ensure compliance with environmental and safety standards, and we believe the existing regulatory framework is sufficient to address any concerns related to data center development. Additional studies and bureaucratic hurdles will only serve to stall progress and threaten the livelihood of thousands of workers who depend on these projects.

Beyond job creation, the Calvert Cliffs project represents a significant economic boost for Maryland, driving revenue for local businesses, generating substantial tax contributions, and positioning the state as a leader in clean energy infrastructure.

Delaying or complicating this project through HB 270 / SB 116 sends the wrong message to investors and could push similar opportunities to other states.

Iron Workers Local 5 urges the committee to reject this legislation and allow Maryland to continue fostering economic growth and job creation. Our union stands ready to support responsible development that benefits both our workforce and the communities we serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aaron Bast
Business Manager and Financial Secretary Treasurer
Iron Workers Local 5