

## **Testimony in Support of SB0332**

**Presented by Bryan Price**

### **Maryland State Senate Hearing on the Task Force to Study the Premature Retirement of Electricity Generation Facilities**

Senator Ready and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Senate Bill 332 (SB0332), a pivotal piece of legislation designed to ensure Maryland's energy future is both reliable and sustainable. My name is Bryan Price, and I am here as a concerned Maryland resident deeply invested in the integrity of our state's energy transition.

SB0332 acknowledges the complexity of transitioning away from traditional energy sources and the critical need for thoughtful, data-driven decisions. While the shift to renewable energy is essential for Maryland's environmental goals, it must be managed carefully to prevent unintended consequences, such as grid instability, rising energy costs, and economic disruptions for communities reliant on existing power infrastructure.

As a fisherman, I am increasingly concerned about a growing trend where out-of-state interests and interstate consortiums dictate environmental policy for Maryland, imposing unrealistic, economically devastating, and disingenuous requirements. These mandates often come from entities whose own states engage in equally destructive environmental practices. I have seen how such trends have impacted the watermen of the Eastern Shore, threatening their livelihoods and way of life. I fear that energy production has become the latest area where Maryland is penalized for its environmental consciousness.

As a self-proclaimed, die-hard, tree-hugging environmentalist, I wholeheartedly support the transition to greener energy systems. Until their contract with BGE was canceled, I willingly paid higher energy costs to support a provider that sourced a greater proportion of its energy from renewable resources. However, Maryland's rapid transition from fossil fuels prematurely generates a backlash effect—rising consumer costs, opportunistic companies like PSEG threatening homeowners and farmers with property seizures through eminent domain, the loss of energy sector jobs, and a growing perception that we lack energy independence. This backlash can erode public support for clean energy initiatives. When people feel economically threatened, they seek validation for their opposition, often disregarding scientific evidence, environmental stewardship, and long-term sustainability in favor of short-term security. These behaviors do not bode well for the future of the green movement.

Moreover, Maryland's perceived inability to generate sufficient power invites external entities to implement environmentally destructive projects within our borders. The

Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project is a prime example, with its adverse impacts on wetlands, agriculture, and critical habitats like those of the Bald Eagle, effectively negating any environmental gains made through premature plant closures.

Maryland already imports nearly 40% of its electricity, making the state vulnerable to external market fluctuations and supply disruptions. Abruptly retiring traditional power plants without robust planning could exacerbate this dependency, drive up energy costs, and undermine grid reliability. SB0332 provides a proactive, measured approach to these challenges by: Evaluating Cost Savings vs. Reliability Risks, Assessing Environmental and Ecological Impacts, Considering Economic Implications, Ensuring Grid Reliability, and Fostering Stakeholder Collaboration

SB0332 is not about resisting the shift to clean energy; it is about ensuring Maryland moves forward strategically, inclusively, and sustainably. It recognizes that the premature retirement of electricity generation facilities, if not carefully managed, could lead to energy shortages, economic hardships, and environmental setbacks. This legislation is a necessary safeguard to ensure that Maryland's clean energy future is built on a foundation of reliability, affordability, and environmental stewardship.

I urge the Committee to support SB0332, reinforcing Maryland's commitment to responsible, forward-thinking energy policy. This bill ensures that our transition to clean energy does not come at the expense of grid reliability, economic stability, or community well-being.

Thank you for considering this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

Bryan S. Price, Jr.