

## **Maureen Wambui - Testimony Response on SB0816 with**

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Position: FWA

Maureen Wambui

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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

# **SB816PSCMembershipUnfavorable.pdf**

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Position: UNF

**UNFAVORABLE – Senate Bill 816**  
**SB816 – Public Service Commission (PSC) – Membership -alterations**  
**Education, Energy, and**  
**Environment**  
**Position: Unfavorable**  
**Thursday, March 6, 2025**

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee:

I have testified before the PSC since 2010. We have about 5 million citizens in Maryland which is pretty small as states go in the United States. Currently, the PSC has been operating for the past year with only 4 commissioners and they have handled their workload.

Expanding the number of commissioners to set up districts for this small state does not make sense. In fact based on my experience in Howard County (County) with District representation, this District representation is counter productive. District representatives do not look at the wider needs of our County and only look at their District.

Based on the number of issues that require review and approval in Maryland that are energy related as a result of the Climate Solutions Now Act, these monies would be better spent in beefing up PSC staff support so that there is better oversight of Maryland's 5 utilities. I see the utilities slow walking the needed transition to grid edge based energy generation as required in Public Conference 44 – Transforming the Grid, adopted in 2016.

I ask that the committee report out the bill Unfavorably.

Paul Verchinski, BGE  
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