

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB 0596 – Large Load Customers – Electric System Interconnection and Demand Response Program (Data Center Clean Capacity)

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 24, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mona Guilfoil and I am writing in support of SB0596.

I live in rural Carroll county. I am a member of MD Third Act which along with over forty other environmental, advocacy and community organizations forms the Nature Forward Coalition of Marylanders for Data Center Reform(MDCR). My neighbors and community in Carroll County are in the path of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP). This 67-mile transmission line is being planned to bring fossil fuel generated power from Pennsylvania through Maryland to hyperscale data centers in Northern Virginia. Maryland farms, businesses, neighborhoods, even land in preservation are being threatened by this project because these large load, hyperscale data centers require so much energy. They are straining the grid and we are expected to pay the price. Clearly, we need responsible, fair, forward-looking planning for how data centers are developed and added to the grid.

We need SB 0596.

This bill would:

- Establish a voluntary [demand response](#) program for data centers
- Require that new data centers get at least 25% of their energy from carbon-free sources or demand response
- Prioritize data centers that bring their own clean energy
- Require that data centers pay into a community benefit fund

SB 0596 is a necessary step to ensure that data centers help build up our grid, not just take from it---and build it up in a way that's fair, climate-friendly, and respectful of Maryland communities and rate-payers.

I respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on SB 0596.

Thank you.

