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February 19, 2026

Oppose: SB 373 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV Opposes SB 373 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act).

SB 373 would require Maryland to withdraw from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regional cap-and-invest program that Maryland has participated in for more than a decade and that has delivered concrete environmental, economic, and public health benefits to communities across the state.

RGGI places a declining limit on carbon pollution from power plants while encouraging investment in cleaner generation and demand-side resources. Since joining RGGI in 2007, [Maryland has received more than \\$1.6 billion](#) in proceeds from the auction of carbon allowances, which are invested through the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) to support energy efficiency upgrades, renewable energy deployment, bill assistance, and weatherization programs that lower energy costs for households and businesses, often serving low-income and overburdened communities. In addition to economic and environmental benefits, these programs also yield public health improvements by reducing co-pollutants associated with fossil fuel generation. Cleaner air means fewer asthma attacks, reduced hospital visits, and lower health care costs, particularly in communities that have long borne a disproportionate share of pollution.

It is imperative for the economic and environmental health of the state that Maryland continue to stay in RGGI. This cooperative, regional, and reasonable approach has resulted in carbon reductions with simultaneous revenue generation, with proceeds invested in ways that deliver cleaner air, lower bills, and greater resilience for communities throughout the state. For these reasons, Maryland LCV urges the Committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 373.