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CONSERVATION  
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March 12, 2026

**Support: SB 992 - Public Utilities - Large Load Customers - Registration and Demand Response Program**

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports the intent of SB 992, which requires large load customers, including data centers, to register with and disclose information to the Public Service Commission. This transparency will help the state more accurately plan for energy needs and avoid the problem of “phantom loads.” Phantom loads are where applicants pursue multiple substantively similar proposals within the PJM grid without the intent of bringing them all to completion, thereby requiring the state to plan for loads that will never occur. Phantom loads drive up costs at the PJM capacity market, which leads to higher energy bills for Marylanders. We thank Senator Hester for her continued leadership on this issue.

Across the country, large load customers are driving unprecedented increases in projected electricity demand. These projections are often speculative and uncertain, yet utilities must still plan and build infrastructure to meet them. This creates a serious risk of overbuilding generation and transmission, leaving Maryland households and small businesses to bear the costs if projected load does not materialize. SB 992 addresses this risk by requiring large load customers to contribute to the capacity needed to serve them and by ensuring that interconnection requests reflect credible, actionable projects.

As a member of the Marylanders for Data Center Reform Coalition, Maryland LCV encourages consideration of the proposed amendments, which have been previously submitted to the sponsors by the coalition. These amendments would clarify and strengthen the legislation.

Maryland LCV wants to **Power Maryland Forward, supporting energy affordability through deployment of solar and storage, defense against more fossil fuels and unchecked utility profits, while getting the most out of the electricity grid we have.** SB 992 represents a balanced, forward-looking approach to managing load growth, protecting ratepayers, and strengthening grid reliability. Maryland LCV urges a favorable report on this bill with the offered amendments.

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