

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB0596 – Large Load Customers – Electric System Interconnection and Demand Response Program

Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

February 24, 2026

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

My name is Gita Lefstein, and I am a resident of Baltimore County, Maryland. I am writing in support of SB0596, Large Load Customers – Electric System Interconnection and Demand Response Program.

Large loads, which primarily refers to data centers, if not handled correctly, could cause major increases in the cost of electricity for all customers in Maryland. They could also cause many other problems, including increased pollution if powered by fossil fuels and back-up generators, and insufficient electricity at times of peak demand. PJM, the regional grid operator for the region which includes Maryland, does not operate in the interests of consumers. It operates in the interests of its members, largely industry companies. Maryland needs to pass legislation that will protect consumers from having to pay the costs of electricity for data centers, that will ensure that data centers get cut back first if there is insufficient energy, and that will make sure that new energy creation puts priority on clean energy sources, such as solar and wind, with battery backup.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on SB0596.

Thank you.