



TESTIMONY FOR SB0780

Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity - BURDEN Analysis (CHERISH Our Communities Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0780 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

For decades, decisions made by the Public Service Commission (PSC) have been made with the intent to facilitate the building of infrastructure rather than what was necessary for the public good. What those policies have left us with are areas of that state that are toxic to the residents who live there and never had a voice.

The CHERISH Act would realign the goals of the PSC to ensure that the infrastructure we do build (and renew permits for) would have safeguards for the residents of the state. It would require –

- Any new Certificates for Convenience and Necessity (CPCNs) to include an Environmental Impact Statement and Baseline Understanding of Risk, Disparities, and Environmental Needs (BURDEN) Report
- The PSC to conduct a public notice and review process for these permits
- The PSC to prepare a final Existing BURDEN Report based on public comment and input from stakeholders
- The PSC to determine whether issuing a permit would cause an increased potential for adverse impacts on the community

Our members look forward to having our primary environmental watchdog support the public needs in this manner. We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.