
House Bill 1532 – Utility RELIEF (Reducing Energy Load Inflation for Everyday Families) Act

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Potomac Edison, a subsidiary of FirstEnergy Corp., serves approximately 293,000 customers in all or parts of seven Maryland counties (Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington). FirstEnergy is dedicated to safety, reliability, and operational excellence. Its electric distribution companies form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving customers in Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia.

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House Bill 1532 - *Utility RELIEF (Reducing Energy Load Inflation for Everyday Families) Act* as amended enacts sweeping reforms to Maryland's energy policy by expanding consumer protections, streamlining clean energy adoption, revising utility regulation, and enhancing energy assistance programs to reduce costs, promote equity, and advance climate goals.

The bill introduces operational and financial challenges that risk increasing customer costs and disrupting long-standing administrative processes. Targeted amendments addressing some of these concerns could better align the bill with Maryland's climate, economic, and ratepayer-affordability goals. FirstEnergy / Potomac Edison proposes the following amendments for consideration:

Page 21: (2-124, Rate Changes) On Line 20 add "**BASE**" to the Rate Change language.

(B) IN ADDITION TO THE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN § 4-203 OF THIS SUBTITLE, A PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY MAY NOT INITIATE A PROCEEDING THAT MAY LEAD TO A BASE RATE CHANGE UNLESS THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY:

Rationale: Parts within a Rate Tariff can change monthly, and notifying customers could become costly and confusing.

Page 26: (7-109, RTO) On Line 27, Strike "**SHALL**". Add "**MAY**"

(B) A PERSON THAT OWNS OR OPERATES A TRANSMISSION LINE THAT IS DESIGNED TO CARRY A VOLTAGE IN EXCESS OF 69,000 VOLTS AND IS LOCATED IN THE STATE ~~SHALL~~ MAY PARTICIPATE AS A MEMBER IN A REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION.

Rationale: Allows utilities to participate in an RTO only to the extent it ensures reliable and affordable service. Any associated "savings" could be routed back to ratepayers.

Page 37: (7-207, CPCN) On Line 26 add:

(4) (I) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF THIS SECTION, THE COMMISSION SHALL RENDER A FINAL DECISION ON AN APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY WITHIN 180 DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE COMMISSION DETERMINES THE APPLICATION IS COMPLETE.

(II) IF A FINAL DECISION IS NOT RENDERED BY THE REQUIRED TIMEFRAME, THE APPLICATION SHALL BE DEEMED APPROVED BY DEFAULT.

Rationale: Project delays add additional costs to customers – not savings. Mandatory CPCN waivers need preserved and "stop-clock" language should be added.

Page 57: (7-321. Portable Solar) Starting on Line 17, strike “ONCE THE GENERATING SYSTEM IS INSTALLED” and add “**BEFORE INSTALLATION**”:

(E) A CUSTOMER USING A PORTABLE SOLAR ENERGY GENERATING SYSTEM

SHALL:

(1) NOTIFY THE ELECTRIC COMPANY PROVIDING SERVICE IN THE SERVICE TERRITORY IN WHICH THE GENERATING SYSTEM WILL BE INSTALLED ~~ONCE THE GENERATING SYSTEM IS INSTALLED~~ BEFORE INSTALLATION;

Rationale: Potomac Edison’s electric meters are not bi-directional and cannot “spin backwards.” Net production of electricity from a Portable Solar Device could look the same as “Load” – so we need to make sure customers notify us before installation, so that we can install the appropriate meter for these customers.

Page 80: (4-504. HB1) On Line 1, delete “A SUPERVISOR” and add “AN **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**”

(3) COMPENSATION FOR ~~A SUPERVISOR~~ AN EXECUTIVE OFFICER THAT EXCEEDS 110% OF THE MAXIMUM ANNUAL SALARY PAYABLE TO THE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE SAME CALENDAR YEAR.

Rationale: This terminology better identifies the positions this legislation is targeting. In Md. Financial Institutions Code Ann. § 12-401 Definitions. (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated. * * * (i) “Executive officer” means a president, vice president, senior officer responsible for business operations, chief financial officer, or any other individual who performs similar functions.

Page 81: (7-306. Net Metering) On Line 27, retain **JULY 1, 2029;**

2. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION, IS PLACED IN SERVICE ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2029; AND

Rational: We believe a two-year time limit for Community Solar projects to become operational is reasonable. Stretching them out 3, 4, or even 5 years does not help customer affordability issues quickly enough.

Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy is very appreciative of the Net Energy Metering modifications being made in HB-1532, and the further saving contemplated in the transition to a successor program. Inclusion of language limiting the development of Community Solar projects in our service territory recognizes the direct financial consequences these projects have on our customers, and the changes proposed in this bill will further help with affordability issues.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide information to assist the Committee’s deliberations on the Utility RELIEF Act and we remain committed to working collaboratively toward energy policies that advance Maryland’s environmental goals – all while protecting customer affordability.