

CHESAPEAKE PSR PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



HOUSE BILL HB 1532

UTILITY RELIEF ACT

Hearing committee: SENATE COMMITTEE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

MARCH 25, 2026

POSITION: OPPOSE

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility opposes HB 1532. Delaying GHG reduction targets of EMPOWER by 9 years and reducing energy efficiency requirements, it achieves no meaningful reduction in rate payer bills while making it harder for Maryland to reach net zero GHG emissions by 2045. Unlike the Affordable Solar Act HB345, which would have made it easier for more solar energy to come on line expeditiously as well as help more low- and middle-income Marylanders take advantage of cheap affordable solar energy themselves, HB 1532 has weakened those solar provisions. Instead, this bill promotes nuclear energy, increasing subsidies for “zero emission credits” and allowing ratepayers to be stuck with up to 15% increase in cost overruns. Not legislatively promoting fast, cost effective, health and environmentally beneficial solar, nor keeping the very successful EMPOWER program on schedule, HB 1532 promotes the expensive technology of nuclear energy that will take too long to help us meet our health and environmental needs for clean energy and is why we oppose this legislation.

Some additional problems with promoting nuclear energy:

1. COSTS and DELAYS. STARTED IN 2012, Georgia Power ratepayers on the hook for most of the costs. <https://www.eenews.net/articles/plant-vogtle-hits-new-delays-costs-surge-near-30b/>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/23/climate/us-nuclear-industry-growth.html>
2. Carbon footprint is not zero if you consider the fossil fuel sources of electricity left on line waiting the 10+ years for nuclear power plants to be functioning.
<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.estlett.0c00424>
3. Proliferative Risks <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/sites/cgsr/files/2024-08/Primer-on-Nuclear-Energy-Proliferation-Concerns.pdf>

4. Environmental injustice. Risks to miners and other people on the supply chain of enriching uranium. <https://watermark02.silverchair.com/bgaf057.pdf>
<https://www.epa.gov/navajo-nation-uranium-cleanup/abandoned-mines-cleanup>

5. Nuclear waste with nowhere to go, radioactive for perpetuity.
<https://engineering.osu.edu/news/2025/05/how-and-where-nuclear-waste-stored-u.s.>

6. Present Federal Administration quietly removing many safety regulations which may increase risk of bad outcomes. <https://www.npr.org/2026/01/28/nx-s1-5677187/nuclear-safety-rules-rewritten-trump> "They're taking a wrecking ball to the system of nuclear safety and security regulation oversight that has kept the U.S. from having another Three Mile Island accident," said Edwin Lyman, director of nuclear power safety at the Union of Concerned Scientists. "I am absolutely worried about the safety of these reactors."

7. New study from Harvard Chan School of Public Health found increased risk of cancers people living near nuclear power plants. <https://hsph.harvard.edu/news/cancer-risk-may-increase-with-proximity-to-nuclear-power-plants/>

For these reasons, Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility opposes HB 1532 and urges an unfavorable vote in its present form.

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President
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility