

Statement

of

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Before the

Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates

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RE: HB970 - Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Nuclear Energy and Renaming

Chairman Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Energy and Transportation Committee:

My name is Jacob Tomasulo, and I am a Policy Analyst in the Center for Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. CEI is a nonpartisan public policy research organization focused on free market solutions to public policy problems.

I appreciate the chance to testify today and discuss a bill that would help lower energy prices for Marylanders.

In 2019, Maryland's Clean Energy Jobs Act amended the existing renewable portfolio standard (RPS) and set a minimum requirement that 50 percent of all electric retail sales must be from tier 1 renewable sources by 2030 with carve outs for certain energy sources.¹ However, in 2023, only 13 percent of Maryland's total in-state electricity generation was from renewable energy.² While this figure does not reflect imported power, it still does not give much hope that Maryland will be able to meet the 50 percent requirement.

Not only that, but data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows that the total amount of renewable energy production and consumption have both *decreased* in Maryland since the Clean Energy Jobs Act was enacted in 2019.³

Moreover, one study found that the state's (RPS) has imposed significant costs on ratepayers. In fact, between 2008 and 2025, electricity providers spent just over \$1 billion to comply with the Tier 1 non-solar, non-geothermal RPS requirements.⁴ That is quite the price tag considering both renewable energy production and consumption have decreased. There is also little doubt that these costs trickle down to consumers.

On the bright side, nuclear energy provides a path forward that is both clean and reliable. To start, Maryland's lone nuclear power plant already provides 40 percent of the state's generation.⁵

¹ SB516 – Clean Energy Jobs, 2019 Regular Session, <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2019RS/bills/sb/sb0516E.pdf#page=20>.

² "Maryland Analysis," US Energy Information Administration, accessed February 20, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/states/MD/analysis#:~:text=renewable%20electricity%20generation,-,Renewable%20energy,-%2C%20including%20both%20small>.

³ See "Renewable energy production estimates by source, annual," US Energy Information Administration, accessed February 20, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/states/MD/data/dashboard/renewables>; and "Renewable energy consumption estimates by source, annual," US Energy Information Administration, accessed February 20, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/states/MD/data/dashboard/renewables>.

⁴ Tim Whitehouse and Senay Emmanuel, *Unbundled: Fixing Maryland's Broken Renewable Portfolio Standard*, (Silver Spring, MD: Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, January 2025), p. 7, https://peer.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/1_16_25-Maryland-RPS-Report-FINAL.pdf#page=7.

⁵ "Maryland Analysis," US Energy Information Administration, accessed February 20, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/states/MD/analysis#:~:text=Maryland%27s%20only%20nuclear%20power%20plant%E2%80%94the%20two%2Dreactor%20Calvert%20Cliffs%20power%20plant%20located%20on%20the%20western%20shore%20of%20the%20Chesapeake%20Bay%E2%80%94accounted%20for%2040%25%20of%20the%20state%27s%20generation%20in%202023>.

Nuclear is also dispatchable, which means it can be called upon to meet electricity demand when needed. This is because nuclear power is available almost all of the time and more than any other source of electricity. On the other hand, intermittent sources like wind and solar only provide power when it's windy or sunny. Nuclear also creates competition in the renewable power marketplace which incentivizes competitors to be innovative and develop technologically to outcompete their competition. This helps to lower prices.

For these reasons, the committee should support the classification of nuclear power as a tier 1 source. Nuclear power is clean and reliable, and classifying it as tier 1 will create more competition that lowers prices for consumers.

Thank you