



**7050 Oakland Mills Road
Suite 180
Columbia, MD 21046**

**Phone: 410-290-3890
www.midatlanticpipetrades.org**

Environment and Transportation

To: Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Michelle Guyton, Vice Chair; Members of the Committee
From: Jason Ascher, Political Director, Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

HB 1253 – Gas Companies – Infrastructure Investments – Cost Recovery and Customer Notification (Break STRIDE Act)

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and our four local unions and over 11,000 members across Maryland, I am asking you to **OPPOSE HB 1253**.

While the bill may be intended to alter how gas infrastructure investments are reviewed and recovered, the practical effect will be to significantly slow or halt critical infrastructure projects that support thousands of good-paying jobs across Maryland.

Currently, gas utilities must move forward with long-planned infrastructure replacement projects that ensure system reliability and safety while supporting a large workforce, including pipefitters and welders who are our members. Repealing the existing cost-recovery structure and creating new barriers to infrastructure investment will inevitably delay or cancel these projects. This would eliminate good union construction jobs.

Infrastructure replacement programs support steady employment for skilled tradespeople and local contractors. These jobs support families and are not easily replaced. Along with the wages, these jobs help fund healthcare and retirement savings for our members and their families. If utilities cannot recover investments predictably, they will cut back on projects, leading to fewer construction crews and opportunities for workers along the supply chain.

The effects go beyond just construction jobs. Local manufacturers, equipment suppliers, trucking companies, and small businesses that provide materials and services for infrastructure projects will also be affected. When major infrastructure investments slow down, these ripple effects spread throughout the entire economy.

Maryland should focus on maintaining safe and reliable infrastructure while protecting the workforce that builds and maintains it. Policies that create uncertainty in infrastructure planning risk harming both objectives. Slowing investment in critical energy infrastructure will reduce job opportunities and weaken a sector that offers stable middle-class jobs.

For these reasons listed above, I urge you to **OPPOSE HB 1253**

Sincerely,
Jason Ascher
Political Director
Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5 – Lanham, MD
Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 10 – Richmond, VA/Roanoke, VA
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 110 – Norfolk, VA
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 74 – Newark, DE

Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486 – Baltimore, MD
Steamfitters Local 602 – Capitol Heights, MD
Road Sprinkler Fitters Local 669 – Columbia, MD