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Environment and Transportation  
Committee

*Vice Chair*  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Chair Korman, Vice Chair Korman, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 1494, Retail Energy Modernization and Consumer Choice Act. Across Maryland, families are increasingly concerned about the cost of keeping their homes powered and heated. Utility bills are not optional expenses. When those costs rise, the burden falls most heavily on seniors, working families, and residents living on fixed incomes.

House Bill 1494 addresses one of the key drivers of rising electricity costs: short periods of extremely high demand on the power grid. When demand spikes, utilities must rely on the most expensive sources of electricity and maintain infrastructure capable of meeting those brief peak moments. Over time, the cost of building and maintaining that capacity is passed on to ratepayers.

This bill allows Maryland's electricity system to operate more efficiently by enabling pricing structures and energy products that better reflect how electricity is used throughout the day. By encouraging energy use to shift away from the most expensive peak periods, the system can reduce strain on the grid and lower overall system costs.

The Retail Energy Modernization and Consumer Choice Act allows electricity supply to be paired with distributed energy resources, such as battery storage, demand response tools, and technologies that can reduce or shift energy use during high-demand hours. These tools help the grid respond in real time when demand begins to rise, reducing the need to rely on the most expensive electricity generation.

In addition to lowering wholesale electricity costs, these modern energy tools can help avoid or delay major infrastructure upgrades. Utilities often must invest in new transmission capacity and grid expansions to meet peak demand, and those investments are ultimately recovered through customer rates. When demand can be managed more efficiently, some of those costly upgrades can be postponed or avoided.

Finally, the bill directs the Public Service Commission to establish clear standards for billing practices, cybersecurity, and interconnection. These safeguards ensure that as Maryland

modernizes its energy system, innovation occurs within a transparent regulatory framework that protects consumers.

House Bill 1494 moves Maryland toward a more flexible and resilient energy system, one that manages demand more intelligently and helps control long-term costs for Maryland households.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1494.

Very Truly Yours,

*Jeffrie E. Long, Jr.*  
Delegate Jeffrie E. Long, Jr.