



HB1: Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Cost Recovery – Limitations

Position: Favorable

January 27, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
Cc: Members of the Committee

Chair Korman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Economic Action Maryland Fund urges a favorable report on HB1, which builds on the Ratepayer Freedom Act of 2025 and adds restrictions to what investor-owned utilities can recover through rates, with a particular focus on executive compensation, as well as some limitations on miscellaneous corporate expenditures.

As the members of this committee are painfully aware, energy rates have risen dramatically in recent years due to a variety of factors. Thousands of Marylanders each year face shutoff notices due to nonpayment, while many others are forced to juggle multi-hundred-dollar utility bills alongside the ever-increasing costs of rent, groceries, and other necessities.

Captive ratepayers should not be forced to subsidize expenses that provide them no direct benefit. There is a clear hypocrisy in expecting ratepayers who are struggling to pay for basic necessities to fund lavish compensation packages for top executives, or those who cannot afford their groceries because of utility bills to help pay for company entertainment and events.

In a free market, consumers can comparison shop, providing incentives to corporations to keep costs reasonable. But in our regulated utility market, consumers do not have choice and there must be reasonable limits on the personal and corporate profits that companies can pass on to captive consumers.

HB1 is a commonsense, pro-consumer measure that promotes transparency, prevents unnecessary costs from being passed onto ratepayers, and ensures that Marylanders are not paying more than they should for their essential utility services. For these reasons, we urge a favorable report and would support any technical amendments that would strengthen oversight and implementation by the PSC.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Deputy Director

Economic Action (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) champions economic rights and housing justice through advocacy, research, consumer education, and direct service. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.