



# EASTON UTILITIES

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February 27, 2026

**To:** House Environment & Transportation Committee  
**From:** Easton Utilities Commission  
**Bill:** HB 958 – Natural Gas – Connection and Line Extension – Discounts and Payment Plans  
**Position:** Support

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On behalf of Easton Utilities Commission (EUC), a small municipally-owned utility and telecommunications company operating the electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, cable TV, and internet services for the Town of Easton and portions of the surrounding area, I am writing to express our support for **HB 958**.

This bill would prohibit the Public Service Commission from adopting or enforcing any regulation or order that prohibits a public service company from offering a discount or payment plan for the connection or extension of a natural gas line to a customer's property.

As the only municipally-owned, natural gas utility in the State, EUC maintains over 154 miles of gas main and services throughout our service territory and completed a gas main replacement program in 2017, effectively creating an entirely new system. We continue to reinvest in and expand our system, in no small part, because customer surveys indicate little to no interest in transitioning away from this clean, abundant, and affordable fuel source.

Line extension allowances and Contribution-in-Aid-of-Construction (CIAC) formulas are long-standing and cost-effective practices that ensure affordable access to natural gas service for new homes, businesses, and communities. At a time when affordability in general and energy affordability in particular, are top issues facing Marylanders, this bill would halt regulatory efforts that would limit energy choice, increase housing costs, and stymie economic development.

Additionally, current gas customers benefit from a growing system because fixed costs, such as demand charges, get spread over more billing determinants, especially if new commercial customers can be interruptible and curtailed during peak demand days

Within Easton's own service territory, two major housing developments totaling more than 450 homes, were provided CIAC for gas line extensions that represent on average an immediate potential savings of \$1,250 per home. The Town of Easton, like many communities across Maryland, are grappling with housing affordability and this bill is one simple way to ensure new regulations do not exacerbate the problem.

For these reasons, Easton Utilities supports **HB 958** and respectfully urges a **Favorable Report**.

*Please contact Kurt Fuchs with any questions at [kfuchs@eucmail.com](mailto:kfuchs@eucmail.com) or 443-786-0855.*