



HoCoClimateAction.org
Howard County, Maryland

**Testimony: HB0958: Natural Gas – Connection and Line Extension – Discounts and Payment Plans
Environment and Transportation**
Hearing Date: February 27, 2026
Bill Sponsor: Delegate Buckel
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Submitting: Shari Glenn for Howard County Climate Action
Position: Unfavorable

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton and Committee Members,

[HoCo Climate Action](http://HoCoClimateAction.org) is a 350.org local chapter and a grassroots organization representing approximately 1,400 subscribers. We are also a member of the [Climate Justice Wing](#) of the [Maryland Legislative Coalition](#). Our organization works with residents and ally organizations to promote a safe climate and clean energy future. Specifically, we have worked extensively on clean energy and on building electrification to help Maryland achieve its ambitious climate goals, including net-zero emissions.

We urge you to vote unfavorably on HB958 which would prohibit the Maryland Public Service Committee (PSC) from ending expensive and profitable ratepayer funded incentives for gas line extensions. The elimination of “line extension allowances” (LEAs) appropriately aligns costs and incentives with fundamental economics and fairness, and reversing the PSC decision will have harmful consequences for Maryland gas customers.

Gas utilities have earned enormous profits from LEAs and are reluctant to lose this lucrative money-maker. In 2025 alone, Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) planned to spend \$103.5 million on gas pipeline expansion, which would cost customers \$397 million after accounting for BGE profits and taxes. Washington Gas planned to spend \$56.25 million on gas pipeline expansion, costing customers \$238 million and quadrupling the utility’s return on investment.

Fortunately, the PSC issued [Order 91683](#) in June last year. This order set in motion a process for the PSC to revise the process for new gas system connections to prevent cost increases for current gas customers and end this expensive gas LEA incentive. Ending LEAs is not a ban on new gas line connections. New gas customers can still choose to connect to the gas system; however these customers will be responsible for paying for the cost. The Office of People’s Council expects this decision to save Maryland gas customers more than \$1 billion over the next 10 years and reduce the risk of stranded asset costs. Other states, including New York, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Colorado are ending LEAs and Washington, Oregon, and Minnesota considering similar measures.

For these reasons, we **oppose HB958** and recommend a **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Howard County Climate Action
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