



Testimony on: HB0540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today on HB0540. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of 32 grassroots and professional organizations focused on climate justice, urges you to vote favorably on HB0540.

HB0540 is a utility transparency bill that is good for consumers. It simply requires gas and electric utilities to let ratepayers know when they plan to ask the Public Service Commission (PSC) for an increase in rates. More specifically, the bill requires utilities to notify customers through a bill insert or e-mail that they are initiating a proceeding with the PSC that may lead to a rate change; what the relevant procedural dates are; and where to find information about the rate change on the PSC website. Additionally, utilities must prepare an annual rate report and distribute it to customers with a bill insert and post it to their website. The annual rate report must include a graphic showing the 10-year rate change trend; the costs associated with transmission, distribution, and standard-offer or commodity service; and all customer bill line items, including rate riders.

While this seems simple and like something that should be happening now, gas and electric customers are being blind-sided by huge rate increases were in the works long ago. Utilities were planning capital spending on distribution system projects and asking the PSC for related rate increases years before they show up in customers' bills.

From 2010 to 2024, BGE's electric rates more than doubled while its gas delivery rates more than tripled in that time. Exelon's Pepco and Delmarva Power more than doubled their delivery rates over the same period. In statements at its summer 2024 investor meetings, Exelon pledged higher earnings in each of the coming years to Wall Street investors. These higher earnings would result from capital spending, not changes in supply, i.e., price of gas or electricity itself.¹

To add insult to injury, stunned ratepayers have had trouble reaching BGE to resolve issues. In fact, the PSC is investigating hundreds of complaints from BGE customers about their bills and their inability to reach the company's call center. The PSC Consumer Affairs Division said that from July through the beginning of December 2025, their department received more than 600

¹ Maryland Matters, [It's time for accountability on utility bills](#), Nov. 2024.

complaints, many of which were related to long wait times or frustrations that they couldn't reach a BGE customer service representatives to resolve issues like billing or turn-off notices.²

HB0504 will bring greater awareness to gas and electric customers and give them the knowledge and ability to advocate at the PSC before rate increases are baked into their future bills. For these reasons we ask for a FAVORABLE report.

- 350MoCo
- Adat Shalom Climate Action
- Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry
- Chesapeake Earth Holders
- Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Climate Communications Coalition
- Climate Parents of Prince George's
- Climate Reality Greater Maryland
- ClimateXChange
- Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists
- DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
- Echotopia
- Elders Climate Action
- Fix Maryland Rail
- Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
- Greenbelt Climate Action Network
- HoCoClimateAction
- Howard County Indivisible
- Maryland Legislative Coalition
- Maryland Energy Advocates
- Maryland Third Act
- Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund
- Mobilize Frederick
- Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Montgomery Countryside Alliance
- Mountain Maryland Movement
- Nuclear Information & Resource Service
- Progressive Maryland
- Safe & Healthy Playing Fields
- Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
- The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter
- Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

² Fox News, [BGE rate hikes hit Maryland households as winter energy costs rise](#), January 6, 2026.