



February 13, 2025

**MAREC ACTION TESTIMONY HB 629: FAVORABLE**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

MAREC Action (informally, “Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition”) writes in strong support of HB0629, which would require the Maryland Energy Administration to conduct a study on the potential for land-based wind energy generation in the state. MAREC Action is a coalition of over 50 utility-scale solar, wind, and battery storage developers and manufacturers dedicated to the growth and development of renewable energy across the PJM grid region.

Land-based wind generation is a proven technology delivering gigawatts of low cost, reliable power across the thirteen-state PJM grid, of which Maryland is a part. Advances in wind energy technology, with more powerful individual turbines able to produce more electricity with a smaller overall number of turbines, creates an opportunity for Maryland to harness more of this natural resource. Wind developers have also advanced wildlife monitoring and detection technologies in recent years. The only operating wind projects in the state are on ridgelines in the west, but the study prescribed by HB 629 could highlight new areas with the potential to produce wind power.

Energy demands are rising in Maryland and across PJM due to the rise of data centers, onshoring of manufacturing, and electrification, while new generation has not kept pace with retirements of older, inefficient thermal power plants. Wind turbines are an affordable, reliable, and clean solution to bring new power online. Wind energy is a valuable complement to solar generation and battery storage, and has a comparatively high Effective Load Carrying Capacity (ELCC) rating of 41 percent from PJM. This means wind projects are effective at keeping the lights on during critical reliability windows, such as Winter Storm Fern. Building new land-based wind projects in Maryland would generate significant consumer savings in both the energy market and capacity market, due to the lack of fuel costs and high ELCC value.

HB 629 sends a valuable signal to industry that Maryland is serious about attracting investment from land-based wind developers. For the wind projects currently operating in Maryland, development timelines were extremely long (up to ten years), which could be mitigated by the findings of the study. Aside from one project that came online last year, new land-based wind hasn’t been developed in Maryland in over a decade—largely due to siting constraints. Given this long pause, evolving technology, and rising electricity demand, the time is ripe to pass HB 629. Doing so would encourage a renewed interest in this affordable, clean source of electricity.

Thank you for considering our testimony, we ask that the committee take a favorable position on this legislation.

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