

# Maryland PIRG

**HB540: Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)**

**Environment and Transportation**

**February 10th, 2026**

**Emily Scarr, Maryland PIRG**

**Favorable**

*Maryland PIRG is a state based, small donor funded public interest advocacy organization with grassroots members across the state. We work to find common ground around common sense solutions that will help ensure a healthier, safer, more secure future.*

This bill adds more transparency to utility costs and trends, helping educate the public about their energy bills and providing valuable data when a utility requests a rate hike.

It requires investor owned utilities to provide public notice and a 10 year rate trends report before filing a rate case. It also requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Maryland Office of the People's Counsel to publish an annual rate report for each utility.

The Maryland Office of the People's Counsel has been [doing some of this work through research and reports](#), and having the PSC engage will add additional resources and attention. Requiring the publicization of these reports through customer bills will be very helpful for public education and transparency.

Because they have no market competition for the distribution of energy to our homes, utilities are regulated by the state, with the legislature and the PSC overseeing the companies' operations and approving the costs they charge their ratepayers as well as the authorized rates of return on their investments. This places our utilities in a unique position in which the state has direct control over how much profit they are authorized to deliver to their shareholders. This dynamic makes utilities' political dealings more vulnerable to corruption or the perception of corruption in the public's eye.

It's therefore of utmost importance that utility rates and the ratemaking process happen with clear guidelines and with robust transparency. This bill helps in that effort.

**We respectfully request a favorable report.**