



*Educate. Advocate. Innovate.*

Date: February 27, 2026  
To: Members of the House Committee on Environment and Transportation  
From: Grayson Middleton, Government Affairs Manager  
Re: HB0958 - Natural Gas – Connection and Line Extension – **Support**

Delmarva Chicken Association (DCA) is the trade association representing the meat-chicken growers, companies, and allied business members on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Delaware, and the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Collectively, we contribute more than \$5.4 billion to Maryland's economy and pay more than \$254 million in state and local taxes. We strongly support HB 958 and urge a favorable committee report.

HB 958 would prohibit the Public Service Commission from adopting or enforcing regulations that prohibit 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.

Reliable access to natural gas and propane is crucial to poultry farming on the Eastern Shore. Currently, there are no viable alternatives to this energy source that is used to heat thousands of poultry houses across the Delmarva Peninsula. Most farmers in this region have long relied on short-haul delivery of compressed propane to meet their energy needs. However, recent expansions of natural gas lines on the Lower Eastern Shore are finally making direct access to this clean-burning energy source possible. This direct access is much more efficient and has a lower carbon footprint than truck-delivered propane. It would be unfair and counterproductive to the state's environmental goals to prohibit the customary cost-sharing for expansion that has been enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of customers across Maryland. As such, we urge a favorable report on HB 958.

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at [middleton@dcachicken.com](mailto:middleton@dcachicken.com) or 410-490-3329.

Sincerely,

Grayson Middleton

Government Affairs Manager