



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

House Bill 66

Environment – Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative – Withdrawal

Date: February 10, 2026

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Position: **UNFAVORABLE**

From: Allison Colden,
Executive Director

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **OPPOSES House Bill 66**, which would withdraw Maryland from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). RGGI is a proven, market-based program that reduces harmful carbon pollution while generating substantial revenue for participating states. Maryland has benefited immensely from this program: through Auction 63 alone, the state has received over \$1.22 billion in auction proceeds, all reinvested to support clean energy, efficiency, and consumer protection programs through the Strategic Energy Investment Fund. These dollars directly support programs that cut energy waste, reduce emissions, and strengthen Maryland's clean-energy economy—benefits that would be lost if the state withdraws from RGGI.

Maryland's participation in RGGI is also essential to meeting the state's climate commitments. RGGI is a central component of Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction strategy, helping drive down CO₂ emissions from the power sector as part of a regional cap-and-invest system. Maryland has committed to science-based climate goals that require swift, sustained decarbonization. By withdrawing from RGGI, the state would forfeit one of its most effective tools for achieving these reductions—tools that not only cut emissions but also deliver co-benefits to air quality and public health. RGGI states have already seen power-sector emissions fall by more than 50% since the program began, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in lowering pollution while supporting economic growth.

Withdrawal from RGGI would undermine energy affordability for Maryland families. RGGI funds are used to support **bill assistance, energy efficiency programs, and clean-energy upgrades**, all of which help lower long-term energy costs for Marylanders. These investments reduce household energy consumption, provide relief to low-income customers, and buffer Maryland residents from volatile fossil-fuel prices. Eliminating these resources would harm the very consumers HB 66 purports to protect. At a time when Marylanders face rising energy costs and climate impacts, abandoning a program that provides **hundreds of millions in cost-saving benefits** is a step backward.

CBF urges the Committee's UNFAVORABLE report on HB 66. For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.