

Testimony Supporting HB1287
House Environment and Transportation Committee Committee
March 11, 2026



Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of Wicomico County, and a resident concerned about environmental justice, I am writing to express my strong support of HB1287, the CHERISH Our Communities Act applying to CPCNs for polluting energy generation.

This bill applies CHERISH Our Communities Act principles to Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity, which are the permits needed by new or expanding power plants or other facilities putting energy onto the grid. It is targeted in geography: it applies only to parts of the state that are burdened by disproportionate pollution. It is targeted in scope: it will apply only to polluting energy generation (not wind, solar, or geothermal), meaning that it will apply to very few projects each year and won't strain state resources to administer.

This bill prevents new polluting energy generation from being built if the Public Service Commission determines, through a deliberative public process with public input, that allowing it to be built would contribute to a disproportionate pollution and health burden on the nearby community.

No one should be in favor of forcing environmental justice communities that are already overburdened by pollution to host even more pollution to put more electricity on our regional grid to benefit communities far away - or data center power demands.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Casteel

Sentinels of Eastern Shore Health (SESH)