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**HB 1253 – Gas Companies – Infrastructure Investments – Cost Recovery and Customer Notification (Break STRIDE Act)
Environment and Transportation Committee
March 10, 2026
FAVORABLE**

Good afternoon, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee. My name is Laurel Peltier, and I am a proud member of AARP Maryland and a resident of Baltimore County. AARP Maryland represents more than 850,000 members across the state, making it one of the largest membership-based organizations advocating for older Marylanders. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1253. We thank Delegate Behler for introducing this legislation on behalf of Maryland ratepayers.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering people to live their best lives as they age. Our work focuses on issues that matter most to older adults and their families, including affordable utilities, financial security, health care access, and protection from financial exploitation.

AARP Maryland supports House Bill 1253:

- AARP Maryland opposed STRIDE in 2012 and 2013.
- STRIDE gas pipeline spending to date is \$4 billion.
- Gas utilities can utilize the current Public Service Commission regulated gas rate case system instead of also using STRIDE.

AARP Maryland knows that our members and many senior Marylanders on fixed incomes are grappling with today's unaffordable utility bills. Tough budget decisions are being made to pay for utilities, and the negative consequences are many. From health and safety issues to increased terminations, the main benefit of HB1253 is to tamp down future electricity supply rates.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to support HB 1253.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Westrick, AARP Maryland Advocacy Director at swestrick@aarp.org or by calling 410-310-0374.

