

HB0066_RichardKaplowitz_UNF

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Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0066 – UNFAVORABLE

Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB#0066, Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)

As reported by Environment Maryland: ¹

In only one policy area – Maryland’s participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) – is the state on track to deliver the emission reductions assumed by the Climate Action Plan, due to a region-wide drop in emissions from the power plants regulated by RGGI. As a result, Maryland should consider going further to tighten the program’s cap on global warming pollution.

As explained by the Maryland Department of the Environment: ²

RGGI is a cooperative effort by twelve northeast and mid-Atlantic states to reduce CO2 emissions generated by fossil fuel-fired power plants while benefiting the regional economy. Guiding the program are the shared commitments to reducing CO2 and allowing flexibility and autonomy among the states. Maryland has participated in RGGI since its inception.

This bill would sacrifice the progress made for indeterminate effects on high energy bills and sacrifice progress Maryland has been making environmentally on reductions of greenhouse gases. It would force a bad choice on Maryland by requiring the Governor to withdraw the State from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Maryland must seek other methods and plans for utility bill reductions that do not choose harm to the environment now and in the future.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report and pass HB0066.

¹ <https://environmentamerica.org/maryland/resources/too-little-but-not-too-late/>

² <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/climatechange/rggi/pages/index.aspx>