



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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Bill Title: [HB1253](#) Gas Companies - Infrastructure Investments - Cost Recovery and Customer Notification (Break STRIDE Act)

Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Iman Habib, Climate Policy Analyst on behalf of Progressive Maryland

Date: March 6, 2026

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

My name is Iman Habib, Climate Policy Analyst for Progressive Maryland, a member-led, power-building organization that centers working class voices as we tackle a wide range of issues, including environmental justice. We have over 125,000 members spanning across Maryland with significant bases in Baltimore City, Prince George's, Montgomery, Frederick, and Harford counties, as well as the Eastern Shore. **Progressive Maryland is in strong support of HB1253 Gas Companies - Infrastructure Investments - Cost Recovery and Customer Notification, or the Break STRIDE Act.**

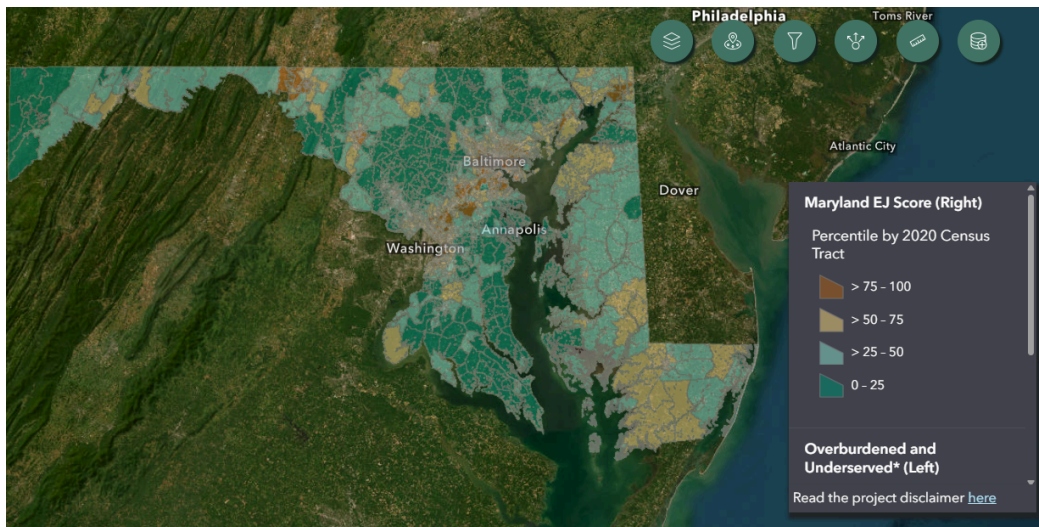
Irrespective of where our members are geographically concentrated, they all share the common sentiment that utility bills are soaring at unprecedented rates amidst an unpredictable and relentless affordability crisis. Marylanders, regardless of where they live, are paying the price for imprudent investor-owned utility spending which prioritizes excessive profits over safety and consumer protections. The more money utilities spend upfront in infrastructure development, the more ratepayers are responsible for recovering through their energy bills. If gas utilities in Maryland continue to operate without additional guardrails, they are expected to invest close to \$8 billion in infrastructure and subsequently charge customers a projected \$41.5 billion!

As an organization dedicated to uplifting work-class voices, this is a critical issue in communities scoring significantly higher Environmental Justice scores (i.e. enduring higher health and pollution burdens),^{1,2} particularly in the areas that are serviced by Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE).³ Maryland PIRG's [analysis](#) of BGE's "Operation Pipeline" STRIDE project demonstrated that the utility is prioritizing expensive pipeline replacement which will ultimately charge customers close to \$20 billion in the upcoming years. At present, BGE gas customers are paying nearly double in delivery rate charges for what they spend on gas itself—this equates to customers paying nearly triple the price of gas to heat their homes! Moreover, BGE is under [PSC investigation](#) for failing to uphold safety standards during infrastructure projects.

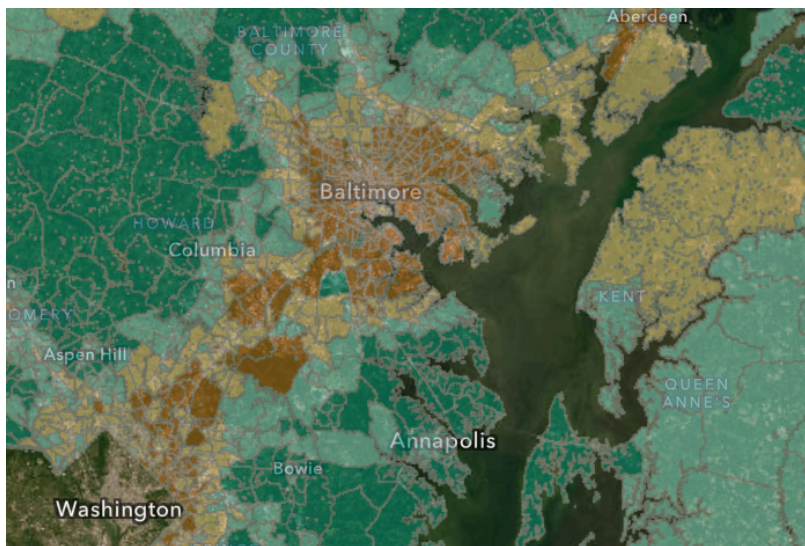
Due to this imprudent spending and negligence, BGE customers are having to bear the brunt of the cost, both financially and safety-wise. Those concentrated in EJ communities are especially

vulnerable to this exploitation not only through their energy bills, but also due to their geographic placement in neighborhoods where these hazardous pipeline replacements are taking place. **Progressive Maryland urges the Environment and Transportation Committee to issue a favorable report on HB1253.**

¹EJ Score breakdown in Maryland. More brown-toned areas indicate higher pollution and health burdens



²Zoomed in picture of areas with higher EJ scores



³Investor-owned utility service breakdown across in Maryland

Figure 1: Maryland Utilities and their Service Territories in Maryland⁵

