



SUPPORT – House Bill 70
State Highway Administration Traffic Calming Device Study
House Environment and Transportation Committee

Columbia Gas of Maryland, Inc., (Columbia Gas) is a natural gas utility providing energy to more than 34,000 customers in Maryland’s western counties of Allegany, Garrett and Washington, and we support House Bill 70.

The legislation requires the Maryland State Highway Administration to study and make recommendations on the implementation of a consistent statewide policy for the use of traffic calming devices on highways in the State. Such a study will assist in determining next steps to improve safety in highway work zones and protect the individuals who work in them.

As outlined in the report of the Governor’s Work Zone Safety Work Group in 2024, Maryland has seen an increase in roadway fatalities – including in work zones.

Columbia Gas of Maryland and its sister companies in the states of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana – all part of the NiSource corporation – have also seen significant increases in intrusions into our utility work zones for the last several years. Tragically, some work zone intrusions have led to injuries and deaths of employees and contractor colleagues.

The Columbia Gas companies in six states had 64 work zone incidents take place in 2024 and 56 work zone incidents take place in 2025. Specifically in Maryland, six work zone intrusions have taken place in our three counties alone within the last five years.

Of the 120 work zone intrusions that took place over the last two years, approximately 74% were the result of negligence on the part of drivers. Columbia Gas believes we must do more to protect workers in work zones. It is our hope the study conducted as a result of House Bill 70’s passage will result in proactive and positive recommendations and steps to improve highway work zone safety increasing protections for Maryland workers.

Columbia Gas believes the study requirement of House Bill 70 is an appropriately and reasonably crafted policy related to protecting workers in work zones and requests a favorable report on the bill.

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