

**2026 HB0066 Testimony For 2026-02-10.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: FAV

## Testimony For HB0066

Honorable Delegates

Please enter a favorable report for HB0066.

I support requiring the Governor to withdraw the State from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Because of this initiative, Maryland erroneously decided that its reliance on traditional forms of electricity supply entrenches the State's dependence on fossil fuels, working against the State's policy of decreasing greenhouse gas production. Our power plants using coal and natural gas were closed prematurely as the anticipated power from Solar and Wind sources did not compensate for the loss of power from these closed plants.

Consequently, we can no longer produce enough electricity to meet our needs. Increasing demand with a dwindling supply has driven up energy costs. Also, we must pay more delivery fees to import energy from neighboring states such as Pennsylvania. We are now at risk for brownouts because of the short sided decision to close these power plants.

It is imperative that we undo the damage from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative , so please enter a favorable report for HB0033.

Alan Lang  
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February 6, 2025

**SB373-HB66.Pavlak.FAV\_RGGI withdrawal.v2.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alex Pavlak

Position: FAV

February 10, 2026

**HB66(SB373).Pavlak.FAV**  
**RGGI withdrawal**

Oral testimony

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to provide a favorable opinion on HB66.

My name is Alex Pavlak I'm a PhD engineer from Severna Park and the chairman of the Future of Energy Initiative. Our mission is to facilitate the clean energy transition. One of my day jobs was to lead engineering teams that created new systems for the Pentagon. My advocacy is numbers and for an honest net-zero.

A year ago January, I published the first of three OpEds urging Maryland withdrawal from RGGI.

Maryland's response to me has been happy talk. I've been told that RGGI is working just fine and in a sense it is. It's working exactly as planned and it's raising tons of money. I've also been told that fossil fuel plants are retiring for economic reasons which is also true. RGGI is a \$275 million tax on a \$600 million industry. Maryland fossil fuel plants cannot afford to pay the tax and compete with plants that do not pay the tax. This is not complicated.

To be clear:

- RGGI caused the Brandon Shores early retirement resulting in last year's Howard County blackout,
- RGGI caused many Maryland natural gas plants to file for early deactivation in 2024. This was reversed by the record high PJM capacity prices that will hit ratepayers this July,
- RGGI is increasing regional GHG emissions [as reported by TCR](#)

Maryland's withdrawal from RGGI can be staged, coordinated with PJM capacity auctions while alternative funding sources are developed.

If FERC terminates RGGI in PJM states it will be brutal.

Please find below links to the three Baltimore Sun OpEds urging RGGI termination

- When green policy backfires, [November 10, 2025](#). (RGGI is simply bad policy for PJM RGGI states)
- The real reason your electric bill is increasing, [June 8, 2025](#), (July '26 for the big increases)
- Maryland is on a path to rolling blackouts, [January 6, 2025](#), (foreshadowed the Howard County blackout)



# **HB66 Testimony DeIBChisholm.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brian Chisholm

Position: FAV

**Environment and Transportation Committee**  
**HB66 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative – Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)**

**Sponsor:** Delegate Brian Chisholm

**Position:** FAVORABLE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **HB66**, the **Restoring Energy Freedom Act**, which **requires the Governor to withdraw Maryland from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)**.

This bill is about one core principle:

**Marylanders should not be forced to pay a state-imposed carbon tax embedded in their electric rates especially when family budgets are already stretched and grid reliability is deteriorating.**

**1) RGGI states are consistently among the highest-cost electricity states**

The simplest “real-world” test of RGGI is what happened to prices where it operates.

Federal electricity price data show that **multiple RGGI member states rank among the highest electricity price states in America** including **Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Maine, and Maryland** states that routinely post well-above-average retail rates.

A recent **Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) / Brattle** analysis of retail price trends (2019–2024) likewise identifies **several RGGI states among the biggest electricity price run-ups in the country**, including **Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, and New York**.

Whatever the intent of RGGI, the lived experience in much of the RGGI region has been unmistakable: **higher electricity prices and faster growth in electric bills**.

**2) RGGI is a ratepayer-funded carbon fee that must be recovered in electricity prices**

RGGI requires covered power plants to hold allowances for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Those allowances are not free and the auction clearing prices have been substantial (for example, **RGGI Auction 69 cleared at \$22.25/ton**).

Those compliance costs flow through the PJM wholesale market and into what Marylanders pay either directly in supply prices or indirectly through rate mechanisms. In plain English:

**RGGI adds a government-imposed cost to producing electricity, and ratepayers ultimately absorb it.**

### **3) Emissions “leakage” undermines the environmental case while ratepayers still pay**

Even if the goal is emissions reduction, the program’s structure creates a serious problem: **generation can shift to non-RGGI states and imports rise**, reducing in-region emissions on paper while **actual emissions may simply move elsewhere**.

Peer-reviewed research finds substantial potential leakage from RGGI-regulated states into unregulated areas.

So Maryland families can end up paying more **without a proportional climate benefit** particularly in a regional market like PJM where power flows across state lines constantly.


### **4) “But RGGI revenue comes back to the state...” is not a guarantee of ratepayer relief**

Supporters often argue RGGI “pays back” through state programs funded by auction proceeds. But even RGGI-friendly economic reports explicitly rely on assumptions about how proceeds are spent and how effectively those programs reduce bills.

And in practice, Maryland’s RGGI proceeds are routed through SEIF and the budget process where funds can be repurposed. Recent reporting and budget discussions have raised alarms that clean-energy funds tied to SEIF/RGGI proceeds can be **shifted to plug general fund gaps**.

Cash Balance as of 6/30/2025		<b>1,007</b>
Less Prior Year Outstanding Encumbrances (MEA) <sup>1</sup>	<b>-324.5</b>	
Available Fund Balance for FY2026	<b>682.6</b>	
FY2026 Revenue Projection (@ with budget mechanism)	<b>432.8</b>	
FY2026 Appropriations	<b>-341.4</b>	
Projected Funds Available EOY <sup>2</sup>		<b>774</b>

<sup>1</sup> Encumbrance value includes program related FY2025 accruals and revenue recognition  
<sup>2</sup> RGGI auction revenue in excess of the budgeted price are not included the funds available calculation for FY2026.

Maryland Energy Administration | [energy.maryland.gov](http://energy.maryland.gov) 

## Other Key Features

- Due to surging Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and Alternative Compliance Payment revenues, the State has accumulated a substantial Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) surplus. As shown in the chart below, the Governor proposes allocating about \$333 million to budget relief and \$392 million to enhancements. After these actions, a SEIF balance of \$164 million remains.

### Proposed Use of SEIF Surplus (\$ in Millions)

#### Budget Relief (\$333 Million)

Transfer to General Fund (Includes Balance in Administration Account)	\$292
Capital Budget Projects	30
Fund Swaps	11

The Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF), which once held a balance of approximately **\$1.007 billion**, was **raided for roughly \$843 million**, leaving an estimated **\$164 million remaining under the most recent budget forecast**.

That's the key point: **RGGI is a mandatory charge on electricity** first and any "benefit" later is **dependent on political choices**, not guaranteed ratepayer refunds.

Marylanders deserve affordability they can count on not "we'll tax your electricity today and maybe spend it well tomorrow."

## Why HB66 is the right policy

HB66 restores energy freedom and affordability by:

- Ending Maryland's participation in a program that **adds costs to electricity and risks pushing generation out of state**;
- Reducing upward pressure on supply prices in a regional market; and
- Sending a clear signal that Maryland will prioritize **reliable, affordable power**—not policy-made scarcity.

Maryland is already facing rising bills, reliability warnings, and major cost drivers in the grid. This is the wrong moment to continue to double down on programs that embed additional costs into electricity.

**HB66 is a practical, immediate step to remove an artificial cost from Maryland's power system and put ratepayers first.**

I respectfully request a **Favorable Report** on HB66.

**HB 66\_MDCC\_Restoring Energy Freedom Act\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: FAV



## House Bill 66

Date: February 10, 2026

Committee: House Environment & Transportation

**Position: Favorable**

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Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 66 (HB 66) would require the Governor to withdraw Maryland from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

Participation in RGGI has placed Maryland under a multistate carbon cap-and-trade regime, limiting state flexibility over energy and environmental policy while imposing compliance costs that ultimately affect consumers and businesses. HB 66 presents a much-needed opportunity for Maryland to reassess its approach to energy and emissions policy and to pursue pathways that better align with the State's economic interests and energy priorities.

Withdrawing from RGGI would allow Maryland to prioritize locally tailored solutions to meet environmental goals without ceding control to a regional compact. This is especially important for ensuring that energy reliability and affordability remain at the forefront of policy discussions for families, employers, and ratepayers across the state.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **favorable report on HB 66**.

**HB66\_UNF\_CCANAF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brittany Baker

Position: UNF

TESTIMONY OF  
LAUREN GYGAX  
MARYLAND PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

TESTIMONY OF  
BRITTANY BAKER  
MARYLAND DIRECTOR

MIKE TIDWELL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**HB 066 - Environment-Regional Gas Initiative-Withdrawal**

**UNFAVORABLE**

Environment and Transportation

February 2, 2026

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

**The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a key part of Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction plan and passing legislation to remove Maryland from this program would be a mistake.** RGGI is a multistate program that requires fossil fuel-fired power plants to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through the market forces of a cap and trade system.

CO<sub>2</sub> is a dangerous air pollutant and a primary contributor to climate change; therefore, it must be regulated. The RGGI program is one of the most robust mechanisms we have to reach our 60% greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal by 2031. Since its start in 2009, RGGI has cut carbon pollution in half in participating states.<sup>1</sup> The health benefits from RGGI are valued at \$5.7 billion, with reductions in childhood asthma and preterm births.<sup>2</sup> These co-benefits occur because regulating carbon dioxide also reduces the amount of localized air pollution from fossil fuel power plants.

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative's model is an innovative and collaborative way to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>. This system works so well because it allows the power generators to make an economic decision to either find a way to pollute less and sell their credits, or to take more credits so they can continue to emit the same amount. Successful Cap & Trade programs reward innovation, efficiency, and early action and, ideally, provide strict environmental accountability without inhibiting economic growth.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nrdc.org/bio/bruce-ho/rggi-lowers-bills-saving-consumers-billions-energy>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/regional-greenhouse-gas-initiative-model-nation>

<sup>3</sup> <https://fpa.org/carbonomics-the-economics-of-cap-trade/>

TESTIMONY OF  
LAUREN GYGAX  
MARYLAND PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

TESTIMONY OF  
BRITTANY BAKER  
MARYLAND DIRECTOR

MIKE TIDWELL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This model is so successful that many states are trying to enter RGGI. Virginia leaders are currently working diligently to try to join the program. The Virginia Attorney General stated that “the Commonwealth reopened the door for participation in RGGI, which we know lowers costs for the most vulnerable Virginians while holding industries accountable to transition to cleaner, more stable, and more affordable sources of energy.”<sup>4</sup> Virginia saw that withdrawing from RGGI did not lower energy costs, it took away the revenues from RGGI that fund important programs in the state.

Maryland has received \$1 billion from the auction proceeds which is used to generate economic benefits and fund Maryland’s deployment of clean energy, energy assistance for low income households, and climate resiliency projects.<sup>5</sup> Thanks to energy efficiency measures and cost-saving renewable energy projects RGGI has saved consumers in the region more than \$1.2 billion dollars on energy bills and created 45,000 job-years of work across the region.<sup>6</sup>

RGGI is an essential program for Maryland and therefore, **I request an unfavorable report of HB66.**

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<sup>4</sup><https://insideclimatenews.org/news/23012026/virginia-attorney-general-takes-steps-to-rejoin-the-regional-greenhouse-gas-initiative/>

<sup>5</sup><https://news.maryland.gov/mde/2022/12/12/maryland-raises-a-billion-dollars-for-climate-progress-and-energy-efficiency/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/regional-greenhouse-gas-initiative-model-nation>

**CLPP Testimony HB0066 2026 UNFAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Donald M. Goldberg

Position: UNF

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**  
**Testimony on: HB0066 Environment — Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)**  
**Submitted by: Donald M. Goldberg, Executive Director**  
**Position: Opposed**  
**Hearing Date: February 10, 2026**

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express Climate Law & Policy Project's opposition to HB0066 Environment — Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act).

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a cooperative regional cap-and-invest program among several Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states (including Maryland) that covers the electric power sector and sends the revenues from allowance auctions back to each state for investment. Since RGGI's launch in 2009, emissions have reduced in RGGI states by more than 50%, and its auctions have generated more than \$9 billion in proceeds. Maryland alone has received more than \$1.6 billion in RGGI auction proceeds.

Each RGGI state has discretion in how it invests auction proceeds, but as a whole, as of 2023, Maryland's investments generally have gone towards energy efficiency (56% of cumulative investments), clean and renewable energy (12%), emissions abatement and climate adaptation (7%), beneficial electrification (5%), and direct bill assistance (15%). In 2023, around 36% of state investments went towards environmental justice and equity, including clean transportation, electrification infrastructure, and low-income rate relief, weatherization, and efficiency.

RGGI money flows into Maryland's Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF). As of 2023, Maryland had directed 48% of RGGI funds to direct bill assistance, 28% to energy efficiency, 8% to clean and renewable energy, and 10% to emissions abatement and climate adaptation. In 2023, Maryland RGGI investments included low-income bill payment, low- and moderate-income energy efficiency programs, state and city energy efficiency projects, clean transportation, solar incentives, research and development, and more.

Overall, RGGI has been a great boon to Maryland, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants, lowering electricity bills, and supporting beneficial clean energy programs in the state.

We urge the committee to keep RGGI working for Maryland by rejecting HB0066.

# **ECA Testimony HB0066 Withdraw from RGGI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Frances Stewart

Position: UNF



HB0066 - UNFAVORABLE  
Frances Stewart, MD  
Elders Climate Action Maryland  
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HB0066 Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal

Meeting of the Environment and Transportation Committee

February 10, 2026

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge an unfavorable report on HB0066.

Elders Climate Action is a nationwide organization devoted to ensuring that our children, grandchildren, and future generations have a world in which they can thrive. The Maryland Chapter has members across the state.

Each day, we see the climate crisis more clearly. We know that Maryland is at risk for sea level rise, flooding from intense rainfall, heat waves, and other extreme weather events. Maryland can also be a leader in moving us to a safer, cleaner future where we all can thrive. The clean energy transition is an essential part of that future.

One of the most effective ways Maryland has reduced greenhouse gas emissions and supported the clean energy transition is through our longstanding participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

The cleanest, cheapest energy is the energy we don't need to use. RGGI has helped Maryland improve energy efficiency, resulting in decreased electricity demand despite a growing population and economy. It has encouraged the growth of clean, affordable renewable energy. Those improvements have allowed

consumers in the RGGI states to save over \$1 billion in energy costs. It has created thousands of jobs and added over \$4 billion in economic value. And it has dramatically reduced pollution.

Carbon pollution from the electricity sector has been cut by more than half. It has also reduced emissions of many other dangerous pollutants – mercury, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter.<sup>1</sup> Our cleaner air brings many health benefits, especially for our children.<sup>2</sup> An analysis by Abt Associates<sup>3</sup> in 2017 showed

**Maryland**

**Table 7. Avoided Health Effects in MD due to RGGI**

Health Endpoint	Cases Avoided due to RGGI						Total
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Acute Bronchitis	24	3	1	7	12	7	54
Adult Mortality	16 - 36	2 - 4	1 - 2	5 - 10	8 - 17	5 - 11	36 - 81
Asthma ER Visits	10	1	<1	3	5	3	23
Asthma Exacerbations	469	55	26	132	220	134	1,036
Cardiovascular Hospital Admissions	5	1	<1	2	3	2	12
Infant Mortality	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Lower Respiratory Symptoms	310	36	18	89	148	91	692
Minor Restricted Activity Days	13,196	1,560	759	3,815	6,347	3,862	29,538
Non-fatal Heart Attacks	1.6 - 15	0 - 2	0 - 1	0 - 4	1 - 8	1 - 5	4 - 34
Respiratory Hospital Admissions	4	<1	<1	1	2	1	9
Upper Respiratory Symptoms	443	52	25	127	212	130	987
Work Loss Days	2,213	261	127	639	1,063	647	4,950

Their economic analysis suggested that avoiding those infant deaths was worth between \$ 880,000 and \$1,000,400, but we believe most parents and grandparents would say it was priceless.

This bill’s shortsighted attempt to withdraw Maryland from RGGI would not help to solve the affordability crisis. It would seriously damage our health and our economy and exacerbate the climate crisis. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge an unfavorable report on HB0066.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

<sup>1</sup> “The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Is a Model for the Nation,” July 14, 2021, <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/regional-greenhouse-gas-initiative-model-nation>.

<sup>2</sup> Frederica Perera et al., “Co-Benefits to Children’s Health of the U.S. Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative,” *Environmental Health Perspectives* 128, no. 7 (2020): 077006, <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP6706>; “RGGIHealthStudyExecutiveSummaryJan2017,” n.d.

<sup>3</sup> “Analysis of the Public Health Impacts of RGGI 2009-14 Appendix - State Level,” n.d., accessed February 4, 2026, <https://www.abtglobal.com/sites/default/files/files/Projects/RGGI%20state%20level%20results.pdf>.



**HB0066\_OPP\_MdPHA\_DRAFT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ilona Kabara

Position: UNF



***Mission:*** To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy ***Vision:*** Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities

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**Testimony In Opposition of HB 66**  
**Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal**  
**(Restoring Energy Freedom Act)**  
**Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee**  
**By: Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA)**  
**February 10, 2026**

Delegate Chrisholm and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Public Health Association does not support HB66: Environment – Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative – Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act). From a public health perspective, this bill will incur preventable illnesses and potential deaths upon the greater Maryland population. We urge the delegates and committee to reconsider this bill.

*Negative Health Outcomes*

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a landmark market-based program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This mission to limit greenhouse gases has considerable positive impact on the environment and human health as well. Emissions have air pollutants, such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), volatile organic compounds (VOC), and direct particulate matter 2.5 (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).<sup>1</sup> These air pollutants can have negative effects on the health of Maryland citizens. PM<sub>2.5</sub> is classified as fine, inhalable particles that have a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller. PM<sub>2.5</sub> has been linked to causing a range of negative health effects, impacting the respiratory, immune, cardiovascular, and even nervous systems.<sup>2</sup> A comprehensive meta-analysis concluded that exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> increases average risk for death by respiratory disease by 30%. Furthermore, the same study concluded that exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> increases average risk for death by cardiovascular disease by 10%.<sup>3</sup> Considering greenhouse gas emissions' negative impact on health, withdrawing from RGGI would be putting Maryland citizens at greater risk for largely preventable diseases.

*Positive Impact of RGGI*

Studies have shown and quantified the positive impact that RGGI has had on public health. An analysis by ABT associates reveals that the improvement in air quality from RGGI has resulted in avoiding hundreds of premature deaths from 2009-2014. Furthermore, the economic value of RGGI through public health and productivity benefits is estimated to have saved a cumulative 5.7 billion dollars.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> EPA. (2018, July 31). Air Quality - National Summary | US EPA. US EPA. <https://www.epa.gov/air-trends/air-quality-national-summary>

<sup>2</sup> Sangkham, S., Phairuang, W., Sherchan, S. P., Pansakun, N., Munkong, N., Samdhong, K., ... & Sakunkoo, P. (2024). An update on adverse health effects from exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub>. *Environmental Advances*, 100603.

<sup>3</sup> Juanmei Guo et al., “Long-Term Exposure to Particulate Matter on Cardiovascular and Respiratory Diseases in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis,” *Frontiers in Public Health* 11 (March 2023): 1134341, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1134341>.

<sup>4</sup> “Analysis Public Health Report,” RGGI Project Series, accessed February 5, 2026, <https://www.rggiprojectseries.org/public-health-analysis-report>.

*Disproportionate Harm to Vulnerable Communities*

RGGI also plays an important role in protecting and investing in the health of those in vulnerable communities. In Maryland specifically, funds from RGGI are channelled in Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF), which supports direct bill assistance and clean and renewable energy projects.<sup>5</sup> This will help reduce household expenses to increase indoor air quality, allowing homes of lower socioeconomic status to increase their air quality. Withdrawal from RGGI would put the individuals in these homes at greater risk for respiratory diseases.

We urge you to reconsider your position on the withdrawal from Maryland from RGGI. This decision would be the health of the citizens of Maryland at risk.

*The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) is a nonprofit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education, advocacy, and collaboration. We support public policies consistent with our vision of healthy Marylanders living in healthy, equitable, communities. MdPHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a nearly 145-year-old professional organization dedicated to improving population health and reducing the health disparities that plague our state and our nation.*

**Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA)**  
**PO Box 7045 · 6801 Oak Hall Ln · Columbia, MD 21045-9998**  
**GetInfo@MdPHA.org [www.mdpha.org](http://www.mdpha.org) 443.475.0242**

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<sup>5</sup>Investments of Proceeds | RGGI, Inc. [www.rggi.org. https://www.rggi.org/investments/proceeds-investments.](https://www.rggi.org/investments/proceeds-investments)

**E&T\_HB0066\_UNFAV\_MCEC\_2026\_02\_10.pdf**

Uploaded by: Katherine Magruder

Position: UNF



I. Katherine Magruder  
Executive Director  
[ikm@mdcleanenergy.org](mailto:ikm@mdcleanenergy.org)  
301-314-6061

*Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) was created as a not-for-profit corporate instrumentality of state in 2008 through an act of the Maryland General Assembly.*

*MCEC focuses on an economic development mission to advance the adoption of clean energy and energy efficiency products, services, and technologies with associated jobs, wages, and tax revenue for Maryland. MCEC leverages private capital and private sector capabilities; facilitates the commercialization of innovative advanced energy technologies; implements climate justice initiatives, strives to reduce energy costs for consumers, and drives reductions in greenhouse gas emissions associated with the use of fossil fuels.*

### **HB0066 - Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)**

**Hearing Date:** February 10, 2026  
**Committee:** House Environment & Transportation Committee  
**Recommendation:** UNFAV

**MCEC opposes the intent and purpose of this legislation that requires the Governor to withdraw Maryland from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Maryland's participation in this program has generated more than \$1.6B with an additional \$33.5M in set-aside allowance sales during seventy (70) auctions since 2009.** The RGGI spending formula mandates that 50% of the proceeds go to Energy Assistance, 10% to low-to-moderate income energy efficiency and community programs, 10% to all energy efficiency and community programs, 20% to renewable and clean energy projects, and 10% to administration of the program.

**Since 2017, the State has provided an annual grant of \$1.2M operating capital to MCEC through the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) using RGGI auction proceeds.** The RGGI also provides MCEC, the Maryland Energy Innovation Accelerator (MEIA), and the Maryland Energy Innovation Institute (MEI<sup>2</sup>) with annual funding for operations and programs. Without funding from RGGI, the funding could be significantly reduced or eliminated. Without the appropriation of RGGI funds, MCEC will not be able to operate and deliver on its statute directed mission.

MCEC has proven to be an effective vehicle in efforts to achieve climate and clean energy goals for the State of Maryland. Over the past 17 years state and federal funding invested in and through MCEC have resulted in:

- **Over \$230M in leveraged private capital investment, a 10 to 1 ROI**
- **Over \$93M in project contracts awarded**
- **More than 129M kWh of energy demand reduction**
- **\$10.15M in guaranteed cost savings for consumers**
- **17,279 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> avoided**

A [comprehensive study](#) performed by the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) at Salisbury University, measuring economic impact, tax revenue, and jobs associated with the activity and investments of MCEC, finds those investments have resulted in:

- **\$621 M in overall statewide output**
- **3000 jobs supported**
- **\$82M in tax revenue, and**
- **ROI of 2.87 to one dollar spent with the center**

**Half of the funds collected through RGGI are dedicated by statute to fund rate payer assistance for low-income households in Maryland. Loss of the auction proceeds would directly impact those households in a significant way, impacting affordability.**

**MCEC urges an unfavorable report and thanks Chair Korman and members of the committee for their hard work and consideration.**

**HB 66 - CBF - UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Matt Stegman

Position: UNF



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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## House Bill 66

### Environment – Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative – Withdrawal

**Date:** February 10, 2026

**To:** Environment & Transportation Committee

**Position:** **UNFAVORABLE**

**From:** Allison Colden,  
Executive Director

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **OPPOSES House Bill 66**, which would withdraw Maryland from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). RGGI is a proven, market-based program that reduces harmful carbon pollution while generating substantial revenue for participating states. Maryland has benefited immensely from this program: through Auction 63 alone, the state has received over \$1.22 billion in auction proceeds, all reinvested to support clean energy, efficiency, and consumer protection programs through the Strategic Energy Investment Fund. These dollars directly support programs that cut energy waste, reduce emissions, and strengthen Maryland's clean-energy economy—benefits that would be lost if the state withdraws from RGGI.

**Maryland's participation in RGGI is also essential to meeting the state's climate commitments.** RGGI is a central component of Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction strategy, helping drive down CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the power sector as part of a regional cap-and-invest system. Maryland has committed to science-based climate goals that require swift, sustained decarbonization. By withdrawing from RGGI, the state would forfeit one of its most effective tools for achieving these reductions—tools that not only cut emissions but also deliver co-benefits to air quality and public health. RGGI states have already seen power-sector emissions fall by more than 50% since the program began, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in lowering pollution while supporting economic growth.

**Withdrawal from RGGI would undermine energy affordability for Maryland families.** RGGI funds are used to support **bill assistance, energy efficiency programs, and clean-energy upgrades**, all of which help lower long-term energy costs for Marylanders. These investments reduce household energy consumption, provide relief to low-income customers, and buffer Maryland residents from volatile fossil-fuel prices. Eliminating these resources would harm the very consumers HB 66 purports to protect. At a time when Marylanders face rising energy costs and climate impacts, abandoning a program that provides **hundreds of millions in cost-saving benefits** is a step backward.

**CBF urges the Committee's UNFAVORABLE report on HB 66.** For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [mstegman@cbf.org](mailto:mstegman@cbf.org).

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

*The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.*

# **HB 0066 - UNF - Solar Energy - Construction of Ge**

Uploaded by: Megan Outten

Position: UNF



# Maryland Energy Administration

**TO:** Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee

**FROM:** MEA

**SUBJECT:** HB 66 - Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)

**DATE:** February 10, 2026

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## **MEA Position: LETTER OF OPPOSITION**

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is Maryland's most successful multi-state program, delivering measurable economic, environmental, and public health benefits to residents across the State. Since joining the program, Maryland has used RGGI proceeds to reinvest in cost-effective energy efficiency programs, clean energy development, and targeted energy assistance for Maryland residents.

**Economic Benefits:** RGGI proceeds have served as a dedicated funding source that directly goes back into reducing energy bills and assisting households. Half of RGGI proceeds are directed to low-income bill assistance, while nearly one-third of RGGI funds are invested in energy efficiency programs that permanently reduce energy use. This not only improves housing quality, but lowers household electricity and heating bills, and reduces demand to the grid.

**Climate Benefits:** In 2024, Maryland led the nation in greenhouse gas emission reductions. These avoided emissions translate to reduced public health costs, lower climate-related infrastructure damage, and greater grid reliability under extreme weather conditions.

**Community Benefits:** The Maryland Smart Energy Communities Program also illustrates how RGGI delivers tangible, community-level benefits<sup>1</sup>. These programs focus on planning and capacity building, energy efficiency upgrades, and transportation projects for local governments. These investments lower operating costs for counties and municipalities, freeing up local dollars for other essential services.

Withdrawing from RGGI would remove a proven, cost-effective tool for reducing energy burdens and managing emissions while providing no comparable alternative mechanism in statute. For the reasons listed above, MEA urges the committee to issue an **unfavorable report**.

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<sup>1</sup> The Investment of RGGI Proceeds in 2023. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, July 2025.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Megan Outten, Policy manager, at [megan.outten@maryland.gov](mailto:megan.outten@maryland.gov) or 443.842.1780.

**HB 66 Maryland LCV UNF RGGI Withdrawal.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rebecca Rehr

Position: UNF



**MARYLAND  
LEAGUE OF  
CONSERVATION  
VOTERS**

**Maryland LCV  
Board of Directors**

Patrick Miller  
*Chair*

Honorable Nancy Kopp  
*Treasurer*

Bonnie Norman  
*Secretary*

Kimberly Armstrong

Caroline Baker

Joe Gill

Lynn Heller

Honorable Steve Lafferty

Kevin Loeb

Kim Coble  
*Executive Director*

February 10, 2026

**Oppose: HB 66 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV Opposes HB 66 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act).

HB 66 would require Maryland to withdraw from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regional cap-and-invest program that Maryland has participated in for more than a decade and that has delivered concrete environmental, economic, and public health benefits to communities across the state.

RGGI places a declining limit on carbon pollution from power plants while encouraging investment in cleaner generation and demand-side resources. Since joining RGGI in 2007, [Maryland has received more than \\$1.6 billion](#) in proceeds from the auction of carbon allowances, which are invested through the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) to support energy efficiency upgrades, renewable energy deployment, bill assistance, and weatherization programs that lower energy costs for households and businesses, often serving low-income and overburdened communities. In addition to economic and environmental benefits, these programs also yield public health improvements by reducing co-pollutants associated with fossil fuel generation. Cleaner air means fewer asthma attacks, reduced hospital visits, and lower health care costs, particularly in communities that have long borne a disproportionate share of pollution.

It is imperative for the economic and environmental health of the state that Maryland continue to stay in RGGI. This cooperative, regional, and reasonable approach has resulted in carbon reductions with simultaneous revenue generation, with proceeds invested in ways that deliver cleaner air, lower bills, and greater resilience for communities throughout the state. For these reasons, Maryland LCV urges the Committee to issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 66.

# **Testimony in opposition to HB0066 - Regional Green**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: UNF

HB0066\_RichardKaplowitz\_UNF

02/10/2026

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: <sup>1</sup>

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: <sup>2</sup>

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.**

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

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

**COG CEEPC Comment Letter HB 66.pdf.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robert Christopher

Position: UNF



February 6, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair of the Committee on the Environment and Transportation  
Maryland House of Delegates  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
251 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Opposition to HB 66, Restore Energy Freedom Act

Dear Chair Korman:

On behalf of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), I am writing to oppose HB 66, the Restore Energy Freedom Act, which would require the Governor to withdraw the State from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

Climate change is a regional priority for COG, the association of local governments in metropolitan Washington. COG's legislative priorities include supporting policies and actions that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in metropolitan Washington to meet the region's climate goals. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, power plants are one of the largest sources of GHG emissions in the country. RGGI is a cooperative, market-based effort among the states in the mid-Atlantic and New England to reduce CO2 emissions from the power sector. The Restore Energy Freedom Act will inhibit Maryland's efforts to meet state-wide GHG emission reduction goals. As such, CEEPC, on behalf of COG, opposes HB 66, as it promotes the use of nonrenewable energy.

Please contact Jeffrey King, COG Director of Climate, Energy, and Air Programs at (202) 962-3238 or [jking@mwcog.org](mailto:jking@mwcog.org) if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

---

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cindy Dyballa', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Cindy Dyballa  
Chair, Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

cc: Honorable Michele Guyton  
Honorable Nick Allen  
Honorable H. Kevin Anderson  
Honorable Terry L. Baker  
Honorable Dylan Behler  
Honorable Regina T. Boyce  
Honorable Linda Foley  
Honorable David Fraser-Hidalgo  
Honorable Robin L. Grammer, Jr.

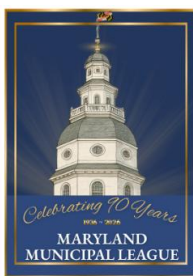
The Honorable Marc Korman  
February 6, 2026

Honorable Anne Healey  
Honorable Marvin E. Holmes, Jr.  
Honorable Jay A. Jacobs  
Honorable Robbyn Lewis  
Honorable Jeffrie E. Long, Jr.  
Honorable Todd B. Morgan  
Honorable Ryan Nawrocki  
Honorable Darrell Odom  
Honorable Dana Stein  
Honorable Natalie Ziegler

# **HB66-MML-Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tyler Brice

Position: UNF



## TESTIMONY

**COMMITTEE:** House Environment and Transportation

**DATE:** February 10, 2026

**POSITION:** Unfavorable

**BILL:** HB 66

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) respectfully opposes House Bill 66, entitled the Restoring Energy Freedom Act, which would require the Governor to withdraw Maryland from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). MML believes that withdrawing from RGGI would have significant and adverse impacts on Maryland's municipalities, public health, and climate resilience.

House Bill 66 proposes that Maryland exit the cooperative cap-and-invest program known as RGGI, which has been a cornerstone of the state's efforts to reduce pollution from the power sector, improve air quality, and fund essential energy and environmental initiatives within local communities. RGGI has provided critical resources to Maryland's municipalities, with auction proceeds supporting projects that enhance energy efficiency, promote renewable energy adoption, and build climate resilience. These funds are particularly important for low-income and overburdened communities, helping municipalities improve infrastructure and deliver tangible public benefits. The loss of this funding stream under HB66 would severely limit the ability of local governments to pursue and implement such vital projects.

The cap-and-invest structure of RGGI has successfully driven down emissions from the power sector, directly benefiting public health throughout the state. Exiting RGGI would risk reversing this progress and could increase air pollution exposure, especially in vulnerable populations. The uncertainty introduced by HB66 would also disrupt ongoing multi-year efforts by municipalities to address climate change, meet state-mandated energy and air quality goals, and participate in regional initiatives aimed at attracting sustainable businesses and supporting economic development.

Exiting RGGI is also fundamentally at odds with both state and local commitments to combating climate change and building resilient communities. Maryland's municipalities have made considerable commitments to lowering greenhouse gas emissions and protecting residents from the impacts of climate change. Withdrawing from RGGI would undermine these commitments and make it even more difficult for local governments to fulfill their obligations and demonstrate climate leadership.

*MML represents 161 local governments and about 2 million Maryland residents.*

While MML appreciates continued discussions about how to best support local governments and their residents, HB66 represents a step backward by removing a proven, collaborative policy tool along with the critical funding it generates. If the General Assembly is to consider fundamental changes to the state's approach to greenhouse gas mitigation, MML urges that any alternative approach must maintain predictable funding for municipal energy and resilience programs, protect communities most affected by pollution and high energy burdens, and ensure robust local government involvement in developing any new strategies.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests that the committee issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 66. MML believes public health, environmental quality, and the ability of municipalities to serve their residents are fundamentally at stake, and that continued participation in RGGI is essential to sustaining Maryland's progress toward cleaner air, stronger communities, and a safer climate future.

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For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

Tyler Brice: Manager, Advocacy and Public Policy, [tylerb@mdmunicipal.org](mailto:tylerb@mdmunicipal.org)

# **HB0066 - Vincent Pacheco UNF**

Uploaded by: Vincent Pacheco

Position: UNF



**The Maryland Department of the Environment  
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

***House Bill 66 - Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)***

**Position:** Oppose  
**Committee:** Environment and Transportation  
**Date:** February 10, 2026  
**From:** Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

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The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **OPPOSES** HB 66.

**Bill Summary**

House Bill 66 would require the Governor to begin the process of withdrawing Maryland from participating in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a market-based program that is aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Governor would also be required to provide a report to the Maryland General Assembly thirty days after the State receives the withdrawal notice.

**Position Rationale**

RGGI is the country's first binding cap-and-trade system for the power sector. The program is a collaboration among 10 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to cap and reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) pollution from power plants. Under RGGI, fossil fuel-fired power plants must purchase a credit, or "allowance," for each ton of CO<sub>2</sub> they emit, which is done through quarterly regional auctions conducted by the RGGI states. Maryland's share of the proceeds raised at auction go into the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) and are invested in pollution reduction and ratepayer benefit programs.

MDE opposes legislation that would degrade the economic prosperity, human health, and environmental protection benefits that RGGI provides for Maryland. Over 16 years of implementation, it has cut carbon pollution from power plants in participating states in half - much faster than the rest of the country - and has produced billions of dollars in electricity bill savings and economic benefits, and tens of thousands of jobs across the RGGI region.<sup>1</sup> In fiscal year 2025, RGGI auction revenues provided \$267 million to SEIF for further investment in the state.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, MDE asks for an **UNFAVORABLE** report for HB 66.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.rggiprojectseries.org](http://www.rggiprojectseries.org).

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Energy Administration, Strategic Energy Investment Fund, Activities for Fiscal Year 2025, Volume 1, Released January 2026. <https://energy.maryland.gov/Reports/SEIF%20Vol%201%20FY25.pdf>.

**SB0373 & HB0066 - OPC Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: David Lapp

Position: INFO

**DAVID S. LAPP**  
PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

**WILLIAM F. FIELDS**  
DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

**JULIANA BELL**  
DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

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**BRANDI NIELAND**  
DIRECTOR, CONSUMER  
ASSISTANCE UNIT

**CARISSA RALBOVSKY**  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

**BILL NO.:** Senate Bill 0373/House Bill 0066 – Environment - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Withdrawal (Restoring Energy Freedom Act)

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Environment and Transportation

**HEARING DATE:** February 10, 2026 (ENT)

**SPONSOR:** Senators Hershey & West  
Delegate Chisholm

**POSITION:** Informational

\*\*\*\*\*

The Office of People's Counsel (OPC) respectfully offers the following informational comments on Senate Bill 0373/House Bill 0066, the Restoring Energy Freedom Act, which proposes to withdraw Maryland from participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) by repealing various statutes, including sections of State Government Article § 9–20B–05, that provide for Maryland's participation in RGGI and for the disposition of proceeds from the sale of carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) allowances under RGGI.

By way of background, RGGI establishes a declining cap on CO<sup>2</sup> emissions from power plants in ten states, including Maryland. Power plants in Maryland and other RGGI states must purchase an "allowance" for each ton of CO<sup>2</sup> they emit. Allowances are auctioned on a quarterly basis by RGGI, Inc., a non-profit corporation that administers RGGI, and proceeds from these auctions are returned to participating states.

As required by statute, 50 percent of RGGI proceeds are currently used to fund Maryland's Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), which provides energy assistance to low-income Marylanders, and other electricity assistance programs in the

Department of Human Services.<sup>1</sup> In Fiscal Year 2025, RGGI proceeds accounted for approximately 71 percent of EUSP funding. Thus, withdrawing Maryland from RGGI would eliminate most of the State's current energy assistance funding. Without other action to make up for the funding, such as through general funds, withdrawal from RGGI would have a devastating impact on low-income Marylanders at a time when energy costs are rising and hundreds of thousands of Maryland households struggle to pay their energy bills.

In FY 2025, Maryland received more than \$267 million in RGGI proceeds and appropriated \$94 million in proceeds to the EUSP. This \$94 million accounted for approximately 71 percent of total EUSP funding for FY 25, with \$37.5 million in ratepayer contributions accounting for nearly all of the balance.<sup>2</sup> If Maryland withdraws from RGGI, EUSP funding will be reduced to \$37.5 million per year in ratepayer funding unless the State replaces the RGGI proceeds with another source of revenue. HB 0066 does not provide an alternative source of revenue. Consequently, as drafted, the bill would decimate energy assistance funding in Maryland and harm low-income Marylanders.

OPC appreciates the opportunity to provide this information on the potential impact of SB 0373/HB 0066 on energy assistance and is available to answer questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Md. Code Ann., St. Gov't Art. § 9-20B-05(g).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Md. Pub. Serv. Comm'n, *Electric Universal Service Program 2024 Annual Report Pursuant to § 7-512.1(c) of the Public Utilities Article* (Apr. 3, 2025) at 3, <https://www.psc.state.md.us/about/reports/>.

# **HB66 REGGIE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rudolph "Pumpkin Rudy" Daniecki

Position: INFO

THE ONLY REGGIE IN MARYLAND  
SHOULD BE THE BURLY, MYSTERIOUS  
GENTLEMAN WHO OPERATES THE  
FRYER (WITH CONSIDERABLE SKILL)  
AT CONRAD'S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT