

HB540_FAV_CCANAF.pdf

Uploaded by: Brittany Baker

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY OF
BRITTANY BAKER
MARYLAND DIRECTOR**

—
**JAMIE DEMARCO
LOBBYIST**

—
**MIKE TIDWELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

HB540- PSC TRANSPARENCY ACT
FAVORABLE
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 10TH, 2026

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

Electric bills have been rising at an unsustainable rate, particularly within the Exelon owned utility territories. By increasing electric rates slightly nearly every year, utilities have been able to slowly but consistently raise the cost of energy. Ratepayers in Maryland have been boiled slowly, like a frog in water, to the point that many people are being forced to choose between putting food on the table and heating their home.

Ideally utilities are able to continue operating without requesting a rate hike, but some utilities have made requesting a rate hike a near annual occurrence. Requiring utilities to share graphics depicting the change in rates over time and information about how a ratepayer can make their voice heard at the PSC would serve as a deterrent for utilities to increase rates so frequently. If a utility chooses not to request a rate hike because they don't want to send a mailer to every ratepayer showing how much energy costs have increased in the past 10 years, then this legislation will have successfully kept energy prices lower for your constituents.

A mailer alone will not solve Maryland energy prices, but it is a concrete step towards increasing much needed education on energy issues and increasing transparency around utility rates.

I urge a favorable report on HB540.

Public Service Transparency Act House.pdf

Uploaded by: Bryan Dunning

Position: FAV



February 10, 2026

**Testimony of Bryan Dunning
Senior Policy Analyst
Center for Progressive Reform**

**Before the Maryland House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee
Requesting a Favorable Report on HB0540: Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and
Electric Companies – Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB0540, the Public Service Company Transparency Act. The Center for Progressive reform is a research and advocacy nonprofit organization that works to advance equity, and responsive and transparent governance. For the following reasons, the Center respectfully requests that the committee return a **favorable** reading on this bill.

HB0540 is a commonsense transparency bill that will provide a tool for ratepayers to understand and engage with utility requests for rate increases. As the majority of Maryland utilities have seen [rates increasing](#) faster, in some instance, much faster, than inflation over the past decade, clarity as to how this process occurs, and the history of rate hikes that have led to untenable utility bills is crucial. This is especially important given the context that, as rates have skyrocketed, many utilities have achieved record yearly profits.

Transparency

This bill requires that the utilities make a disclosure to ratepayers through either bill insert or separate email when the utility is initiating a proceeding at the Maryland Public Services Commission (MD PSC) that may result in a rate change, along with the dates of the proceeding, and information about how to access the proceeding. This is a basic requirement to provide notice to impacted customers about how to weigh in on the rate increases by their *public utility*.

Reporting and Education

The bill requires that each investor-owned utility prepare a 10-year rate trend report that identifies both capital expenditures as well as commodity costs and rate riders, and presents that information graphically. This report is to be submitted to MD PSC and distributed to customers and publicly posted on the utility's website. MD PSC and the Maryland Office of People's Counsel (MD OPC) also work to publish a non-technical description of observed rate trends for the public, and MD OPC has authority to bring a case before MD PSC if the rate reports are factually incorrect or presented in a misleading manner.

This reporting is a common-sense process, subject to oversight, that can inform the public as to the history and driving factors (e.g. capital investments and specific infrastructure projects) causing rate increases. Given the public concern about rising utility bills, and competition, and potentially misleading information as to the root cause, this is an important step to ensuring that the public can understand why bills are increasing. This improved access to information can also have the benefit of empowering the public to meaningfully engage in rate increase cases if and when their utility pursues them.

Conclusion

This is a commonsense bill that will improve utility transparency, educate and empower the public, and does so with a budget neutral fiscal and policy note. As such, the Center for Progressive Reform respectfully asks the committee to return a **favorable** reading on this bill.

Sincerely,

Bryan Dunning

Senior Policy Analyst

Center for Progressive Reform

HB0540_Public_Service_Company_Transparency_Act_FAV

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0540
Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Lehman

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0540 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The increases that Marylanders are seeing on their utility bills are nothing short of shocking. It seems as though utility companies are raising their prices with impunity and no one is minding the store. The Public Service Commission is SUPPOSED to manage utility rates and ensure that just this kind of thing doesn't happen, yet rate payers find out that decisions have been made with no transparency or input at all.

This bill would prohibit any Investor-Owned gas, electric, or gas and electric Public Service Company from initiating any proceeding that could lead to a rate change unless It notifies customers, through a bill insert or separate e-mail:

- that the public service company is initiating a proceeding that may lead to a rate change
- the relevant procedural dates
- where to find information regarding the rate change on the commission's website

It also must prepare and publishes a 10-year rate trend report that:

- includes a visual graphic depicting the 10-year rate change trend, including an indication of the effective date of the rate change and increment by which the rate changed
- identifies costs associated with transmission, distribution, and standard-offer or commodity service; and accounts for all customer bill line items, including rate riders

Our members think that it is shameful that we have to regulate companies in this way so they provide basic transparency and accountability to their customers.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

HB 0540 - OPC Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: David Lapp

Position: FAV

DAVID S. LAPP
PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

WILLIAM F. FIELDS
DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

JULIANA BELL
DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

— **OPC** —
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BRANDI NIELAND
DIRECTOR, CONSUMER
ASSISTANCE UNIT

CARISSA RALBOVSKY
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

BILL NO.: House Bill 0540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation Committee

HEARING DATE: February 10, 2026 (ENT)

SPONSOR: Delegates Lehman, Charkoudian, Embry, Fennell, Hill, Palakovich Carr, Phillips, Ruth, Terrasa, White Holland, Woods, and Ziegler

POSITION: Favorable

The Office of People’s Counsel (“OPC”) respectfully offers the following comments in support of House Bill 540, the Public Service Company Transparency Act. HB 540 would enable residential utility customers to better understand what is driving rate increases and create publicly available information on historical data in supply, transmission, and distribution costs as an important step to improving transparency.

HB 540 would make several relevant changes to the required public disclosures public service companies must make before requesting changes to their rates. Neither existing law nor current Maryland Public Service Commission (“PSC”) regulations require a public service company that is requesting a rate change to (i) directly notify customers through a bill attachment or email, or (ii) provide information on its rates and bill components to customers. HB 540 would make both types of disclosures a requirement prior to any new rate increase. HB 540 would also direct the PSC to publish an annual report that explains trends in rates and consolidates the rate trend reports for each utility.

OPC supports HB 540 and appreciates the sponsors’ efforts to enhance public transparency and understanding of utility rate trends. Publicly available information on

historical trends in rates is key to understanding the causes of rising energy bills. There is little publicly available information—beyond the information that our office has been publishing¹—that shows the different components of utility bills and how they have changed over time. This lack of information can obscure the reasons why energy bills are rising. For example, because the costs to supply electricity go up and down, hour-by-hour and year-by-year, it is easy to manipulate attributions of bill impacts by cherry picking low and high supply prices—largely due to changes in the commodity cost of natural gas over which the State has little control—while ignoring historical trends in steadily increasing distribution rates.

Today, OPC is the only State agency that publishes historical trends and data on public service company rates for the general public.² OPC puts considerable resources into developing the information and ensuring its accuracy based on publicly available information. The information is readily available to each utility for filing with the PSC. Since the PSC is responsible for regulating utilities and approving requests to increase rates, it is the State agency best situated to collect data from public service companies and report on historical rate trends for all investor-owned utilities.

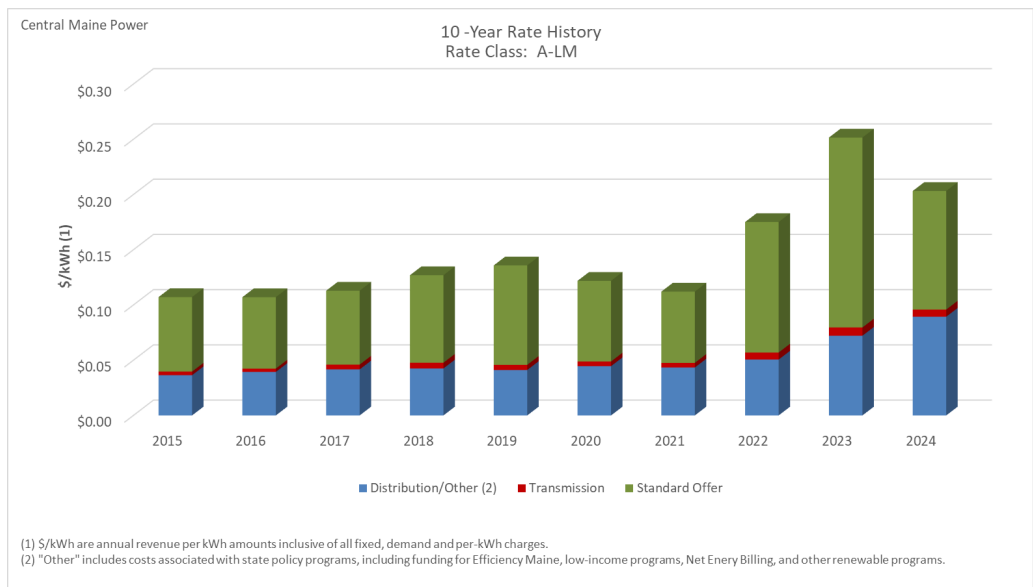
As an example, the Maine Public Service Commission (“Maine PSC”) already has this responsibility. In 2019, the Maine Legislature passed into law House Paper 745 (“HP 745”) which directed the Maine PSC to produce and publish 10-year rate reports for investor-owned transmission and distribution companies.³ HP 745 requires each 10-year rate report to display a 10-year history of transmission, distribution and standard-offer service rates.⁴ It further requires the Maine utilities to include the 10-year report as an insert to customer bills at least once per year. As illustrated below, a graph from Maine’s report clearly and simply breaks down the components of the bill and allows a customer to readily identify what is driving rate increases.

¹ See Maryland Office of People’s Counsel, *Utility Rates and Basics* (last updated March 2025). Accessible at: <https://opc.maryland.gov/Consumer-Learning/Utility-Rates-and-Basics>.

² See Maryland Office of People’s Counsel, *Maryland’s Utility Rates and Charges: Explanation and data on utility bills, rates, and charges and how—and why—they have changed over time* (June 2024, updated March 2025). Accessible at: <https://opc.maryland.gov/Consumer-Learning/Utility-Rates-and-Basics>.

³ See 129th Maine Legislature, First Regular Session, An Act To Ensure Accurate Explanations of Electric Bills, House Paper 745 (2019). Accessible at: https://legislature.maine.gov/bills/display_ps.asp?snum=129&paper=HP0745&PID=1456.

⁴ The 10-year rate reports published by Maine’s Public Service Commission can be accessed here: <https://www.maine.gov/mpuc/regulated-utilities/electricity/rate-history>.



HB 540 would also build on legislation passed into law by the Colorado legislature. Colorado Senate Bill 23-291 (“SB 23-291”), passed into law in 2023, added new requirements for public service companies to meet before filing a request for a rate change.⁵ SB 23-291 required public service companies, at the time of requesting a rate increase, to provide to the Colorado Public Utilities Commission a 10-year rate trend report with specific information including: the incremental increase or decrease from the most recent approved change, a chart or graph displaying the 10-year historical trend for the specific rate the public service company is requesting to change, and the total amount of the rate in each of the past 10 years.⁶ This is information the utilities already have, and need to develop for their standard rate case application.

OPC acknowledges certain technical challenges that may arise in the implementation of HB 540, if passed in its current form. OPC will work with the sponsors to remedy these technical implementation challenges. OPC appreciates the sponsors’ efforts to bring more transparency to the complicated and opaque process of utility rate-making. We look forward to working with the sponsors on amendments to make the bill more technically feasible.

Recommendation: OPC requests a favorable Committee report on HB 540.

⁵ See Colorado General Assembly, *Senate Bill 23-291 - Concerning the public utilities commission's regulation of energy utilities, and, in connection therewith, making an appropriation* (2023 Regular Session).

⁶ SB 23-291 page 3-4.

HB540_UTILITIYTRANSPARENCY_MDPIRG_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Scarr

Position: FAV

Maryland PIRG

HB540: Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Environment and Transportation

February 10th, 2026

Emily Scarr, Maryland PIRG

Favorable

Maryland PIRG is a state based, small donor funded public interest advocacy organization with grassroots members across the state. We work to find common ground around common sense solutions that will help ensure a healthier, safer, more secure future.

This bill adds more transparency to utility costs and trends, helping educate the public about their energy bills and providing valuable data when a utility requests a rate hike.

It requires investor owned utilities to provide public notice and a 10 year rate trends report before filing a rate case. It also requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Maryland Office of the People's Counsel to publish an annual rate report for each utility.

The Maryland Office of the People's Counsel has been [doing some of this work through research and reports](#), and having the PSC engage will add additional resources and attention. Requiring the publicization of these reports through customer bills will be very helpful for public education and transparency.

Because they have no market competition for the distribution of energy to our homes, utilities are regulated by the state, with the legislature and the PSC overseeing the companies' operations and approving the costs they charge their ratepayers as well as the authorized rates of return on their investments. This places our utilities in a unique position in which the state has direct control over how much profit they are authorized to deliver to their shareholders. This dynamic makes utilities' political dealings more vulnerable to corruption or the perception of corruption in the public's eye.

It's therefore of utmost importance that utility rates and the ratemaking process happen with clear guidelines and with robust transparency. This bill helps in that effort.

We respectfully request a favorable report.

HB0540 - Public Service Company Transparency Act.p

Uploaded by: HoCo Climate Action Organization

Position: FAV



HoCoClimateAction.org
Howard County, Maryland

Testimony: [HB0540](#) - Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)
Hearing Date: Feb. 10, 2026
Bill Sponsor: Delegate Lehman
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Submitting: Liz Feighner for Howard County Climate Action
Position: Favorable

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

[HoCo Climate Action](#) is a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing approximately 1,400 subscribers. We are also a member of the [Climate Justice Wing](#) of the [Maryland Legislative Coalition](#). Our organization works with residents and ally organizations to promote a safe climate and clean energy future. Specifically, we have worked extensively on building electrification to help Maryland achieve its ambitious climate goals, including net-zero emissions.

As Maryland families continue to be burdened by ever increasing utility rates, HoCo Climate Action supports legislation that increases transparency and protects ratepayers.

We urge you to vote favorably on [HB0540](#) - **Public Service Company Transparency Act**, which would require utilities to notify customers through a bill insert or e-mail that they are initiating a proceeding with the PSC that may lead to a rate change. Additionally, utilities must prepare an annual rate report and distribute it to customers with a bill insert and post it to their website.

From 2010 to 2024, BGE's electric rates more than doubled while its gas delivery rates more than tripled in that time. Exelon's Pepco and Delmarva Power more than doubled their delivery rates over the same period. In statements at its summer 2024 investor meetings, Exelon pledged higher earnings in each of the coming years to Wall Street investors as a result of capital spending. Utilities were planning capital spending on distribution system projects and asking the PSC for related rate increases years before they show up in customers' bills.

HB0540 will provide greater awareness to gas and electric customers and prevent them from being blind-sided by high increases in their utility bills. It will give them the knowledge and ability to advocate at the PSC before rate increases are baked into their future bills.

For these reasons, we support **HB0540** and recommend a **favorable** report.

Howard County Climate Action
Submitted by Liz Feighner, Steering and Advocacy Committee
www.HoCoClimateAction.org
HoCoClimateAction@gmail.com

HB540_FAV_EconAction.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Bevan-Dangel

Position: FAV



**HB540: Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies -
Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)**

Position: Favorable

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
Cc: Members of the Committee

Chair Korman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Economic Action Maryland Fund urges a favorable report on HB540, which would create greater transparency around utility rate changes.

As the members of this committee are painfully aware, energy rates have risen dramatically in recent years due to a variety of factors. Thousands of Marylanders each year face shutoff notices due to nonpayment, while many others are forced to juggle multi-hundred-dollar utility bills alongside the ever-increasing costs of rent, groceries, and other necessities. In fact, when Economic Action Maryland Fund surveyed our members and other stakeholders this winter, 63% stated utility bills were their primary concern.

This legislation requires utility companies to provide notice to ratepayers of a potential increase, as well as how to access that proceeding. It also requires reporting on 10 year trends, including capital expenditures and commodity costs.

Part of the frustration felt by ratepayers is a lack of understanding why and how their rates keep changing. The transparency created in this bill would increase public understanding and provide the public the opportunity to engage in the rate cases that so directly impact them.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB540.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Deputy Director

Economic Action (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) champions economic rights and housing justice through advocacy, research, consumer education, and direct service. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

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Marceline White · Marceline@EconAction.org | Jennifer Bevan-Dangel · Jennifer@EconAction.org

HB540_FAV_AARP.pdf

Uploaded by: Laurel Peltier

Position: FAV



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**HB 540 - Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)
Environment and Transportation Committee
February 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 HB540. We thank Delegate Lehman 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.

HB 540 offers utility bill disclosure suggestions to help 2.3 million residents more easily find the key information they need to manage their energy utilities, view historical supply and delivery rates, learn about upcoming rate increases or decreases, and participate in state proceedings.

Unlike most consumer goods, where Americans seem to know prices and trends intimately, that isn't the case with energy utilities. Utility bills can be confusing with strange formats and energy acronyms (kWh, KH, kilowatt hour, therms, numbers without dollar signs). We understand that utility billing is a complicated process with limitations for printable messages. We think Delegate Lehman's request for better, consistent, clear, statewide, consumer-friendly, accurate, and understandable utility rate information and proceedings is needed.

These are unusual times for Maryland's older adults, as many find the current electricity and gas rates truly unaffordable. The health and safety of our seniors living has been negatively impacted as they scramble to find the funds to pay for their utilities to avoid terminations and keep the power on. AARP Maryland thinks it's reasonable to require the utilities' Board of Directors to adopt company-wide policies that judiciously spend rate payers' funds on the above business activities.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to support HB 540.

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

HB0540_Public Service Company Transparency Act_E&T

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV



Testimony on: HB0540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today on HB0540. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of 32 grassroots and professional organizations focused on climate justice, urges you to vote favorably on HB0540.

HB0540 is a utility transparency bill that is good for consumers. It simply requires gas and electric utilities to let ratepayers know when they plan to ask the Public Service Commission (PSC) for an increase in rates. More specifically, the bill requires utilities to notify customers through a bill insert or e-mail that they are initiating a proceeding with the PSC that may lead to a rate change; what the relevant procedural dates are; and where to find information about the rate change on the PSC website. Additionally, utilities must prepare an annual rate report and distribute it to customers with a bill insert and post it to their website. The annual rate report must include a graphic showing the 10-year rate change trend; the costs associated with transmission, distribution, and standard-offer or commodity service; and all customer bill line items, including rate riders.

While this seems simple and like something that should be happening now, gas and electric customers are being blind-sided by huge rate increases were in the works long ago. Utilities were planning capital spending on distribution system projects and asking the PSC for related rate increases years before they show up in customers' bills.

From 2010 to 2024, BGE's electric rates more than doubled while its gas delivery rates more than tripled in that time. Exelon's Pepco and Delmarva Power more than doubled their delivery rates over the same period. In statements at its summer 2024 investor meetings, Exelon pledged higher earnings in each of the coming years to Wall Street investors. These higher earnings would result from capital spending, not changes in supply, i.e., price of gas or electricity itself.¹

To add insult to injury, stunned ratepayers have had trouble reaching BGE to resolve issues. In fact, the PSC is investigating hundreds of complaints from BGE customers about their bills and their inability to reach the company's call center. The PSC Consumer Affairs Division said that from July through the beginning of December 2025, their department received more than 600

¹ Maryland Matters, [It's time for accountability on utility bills](#), Nov. 2024.

complaints, many of which were related to long wait times or frustrations that they couldn't reach a BGE customer service representatives to resolve issues like billing or turn-off notices.²

HB0504 will bring greater awareness to gas and electric customers and give them the knowledge and ability to advocate at the PSC before rate increases are baked into their future bills. For these reasons we ask for a FAVORABLE report.

- 350MoCo
- Adat Shalom Climate Action
- Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry
- Chesapeake Earth Holders
- Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Climate Communications Coalition
- Climate Parents of Prince George's
- Climate Reality Greater Maryland
- ClimateXChange
- Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists
- DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
- Echotopia
- Elders Climate Action
- Fix Maryland Rail
- Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
- Greenbelt Climate Action Network
- HoCoClimateAction
- Howard County Indivisible
- Maryland Legislative Coalition
- Maryland Energy Advocates
- Maryland Third Act
- Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund
- Mobilize Frederick
- Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Montgomery Countryside Alliance
- Mountain Maryland Movement
- Nuclear Information & Resource Service
- Progressive Maryland
- Safe & Healthy Playing Fields
- Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
- The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter
- Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

² Fox News, [BGE rate hikes hit Maryland households as winter energy costs rise](#), January 6, 2026.

HB 540 WRITTEN TESTIMONY LEHMAN.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV

**HB 540 – INVESTOR-OWNED ELECTRIC, GAS AND GAS AND
ELECTRIC COMPANIES – UTILITY RATE CHANGES (PUBLIC
SERVICE TRANSPARENCY ACT)**

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Good afternoon, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and esteemed members of ENT.

For the record my name is Mary Lehman, requesting a favorable report on House Bill 540, Public Service Company Transparency Act.

Maryland electric and gas ratepayers are grappling with an affordability crisis as they have watched their monthly bills skyrocket. There are myriad and complex reasons for rising gas and electric utility costs, but they are compounded by the lack of customer awareness on how to engage with the Public Service Commission (PSC) and a lack of transparency around proceedings before the PSC that lead to rate increases.

To make Marylanders more aware of what the PSC is, how to engage with the commission, participate in rate cases, and make their voices heard, the bill has three key components:

- First, all gas and electric utilities – investor owned as well as municipal utilities and cooperatives – must include in each retail customer’s bill and automatic payment email a paragraph describing the PSC and its regulatory role and directing them on how to participate in and observe a proceeding by finding information on the commission’s website. The next two requirements do not apply to municipal gas and electric utilities or cooperatives.
- Secondly, investor-owned electric and gas utilities must notify customers of any proceeding they file with the PSC that could result in a rate change and state that more details about the specific proceeding are or will be posted on the PSC’s website.

- Third, when an investor-owned utility notifies customers of a proceeding, it also must provide that portion of the PSC's most recent annual rate report that pertains to that utility's 10-year rate trend. Within this 10-year rate trend graphic, there must be a breakdown of costs associated with transmission, distribution, and standard offer/commodity service; and account for all customer bill line items including rate riders.

These requirements are meant to make ratepayers aware that they have a say in how their rates may be affected because of a proceeding and to give ratepayers the time and the tools to engage the PSC with respect to potential rate changes.

Additionally, all public service companies must distribute to each retail customer annually a bill insert that includes that company's annual rate report and must also post the rate report on the company's website.

Finally, on or before January 1, 2028, and every January 1 going forward, the PSC working with the Office of People's Counsel (OPC), must develop and publish on its website an annual rate report for each public service company operating in Maryland on its website.

The annual rate report must describe in non-technical terms the rate and a 10-year rate trend identifying costs of transmission, distribution, and standard offer/commodity service; and account for all customer bill line items including rate riders. The commission shall use information provided by the utility company in its own customer bill inserts.

Finally, OPC is required to bring a case to the Commission if OPC determines an annual rate report published by the Commission has incomplete or incorrect information.

AMENDMENTS: Through conversations with affected utilities (PEPCO and BGE), the Office of People's Counsel, and the Public Service Commission, I am putting forward several amendments, some of which are clarifying, others that strike language that is either duplicative or too descriptive, and one that requires the informational paragraph about the PSC to appear on all gas and electric utility ratepayers' bills including customers of municipal systems and cooperatives.

CONCLUSION: Marylanders have seen a staggering 44 percent increase in utility rates since 2020. According to the OPC, BGE has increased gas rates three-fold since 2010 while Columbia Gas rates have grown 3.5 times the rate of inflation.

The story of rate increases also hold true for electric supply. From the same OPC report, PEPCO and Delmarva Power have increased their rates by more than double since 2010, while BGE has increased its rates 1.8 times. Potomac Edison has an average yearly increase of 2.1%, SMECO 4.3%, BGE 4.6%, Delmarva 5.8%, and PEPCO 6.0%. Consumers have no idea when these rate changes are coming, nor do they know why they are happening. This bill will keep Marylanders better informed and able to engage in proceedings that may lead to further rate increases.

I ask that you view HB540 as an important form of consumer education, protection and engagement on a critical pocketbook issue that will allow ratepayers to use their voice more effectively in proceedings before the PSC. I respectfully ask that you give this bill a favorable report.

HB540 - FAV - Public Service Company Transparency

Uploaded by: Megan Outten

Position: FAV



Maryland

Energy Administration

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

FROM: MEA

SUBJECT: HB 540 - Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

DATE: February 10, 2026

MEA Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Energy Administration respectfully submits this letter of support for House Bill 540, which advances greater transparency and accountability in utility rate proceedings.

As Maryland continues to navigate rising energy costs, infrastructure investments, and a rapidly revolving electric grid, it is increasingly important that ratepayers understand why costs change, how decisions are made, and where they can engage in the regulatory process. HB 540 takes meaningful steps towards strengthening that understanding by improving communication between investor-owned utilities, regulators, and the customers they serve.

The bill's requirement that utilities provide advanced notice when initiative proceedings that may lead to a rate change, along with clear procedural timelines and links to the Public Service Commission resources, helps ensure that customers are informed early and can meaningfully participate. Too often, rate proceedings feel opaque or inaccessible to the average household. HB 540 helps demystify this process and reinforces public confidence in Maryland's regulatory framework.

MEA also strongly supports the bill's emphasis on clear, nontechnical rate education. The required 10-year rate trend reports, visual depictions of historic rate changes, and accounting of bill line items offer customers critical context about how rates evolve over time. This long-term view is particularly important as Maryland makes necessary investments in grid reliability, resilience, and clean energy infrastructure. Informed ratepayers are better equipped to make energy decisions, engage with available efficiency and clean energy programs, and plan for household energy costs. Transparency and education are essential complements to affordability-focused policies and consumer protection efforts across the State.

MEA urges the committee to issue a **favorable report**.

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 or 443.842.1780.

Maryland LCV FAV HB 540 Public Service Company Tra

Uploaded by: Rebecca Rehr

Position: FAV



**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

SUPPORT HB 540 Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV Supports HB 540, The Public Service Company Transparency Act and we thank Delegate Lehman for her leadership on this issue.

Electricity bills are skyrocketing and Maryland LCV is supportive of a number of initiatives to increase transparency and accountability with utilities. HB 540 requires gas and electric utilities to let ratepayers know when they plan to ask the Public Service Commission (PSC) for an increase in rates. The bill requires utilities to notify customers through a bill insert or e-mail that they are initiating a proceeding with the PSC that may lead to a rate change; what the relevant procedural dates are; and where to find information about the rate change on the PSC website. This level of information and the timing of information provided are important as people try to navigate the reasons behind their increasing bills.

Maryland LCV urges a favorable report on HB 540.

HB0540 Richard Kaplowitz FAV

Uploaded by: Richard Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

HB0540_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

02/10/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#0540 – FAVORABLE

Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency 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 support of HB#0540, Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Maryland consumers continue to find increasing energy costs. As reported by the Office of Peoples Counsel, State of Maryland, *Maryland electric bills are going up this fall*¹

Most people in Maryland are seeing higher electric bills this fall compared to last fall.

These higher costs are largely because prices from the “capacity market” auction went up by 800%. The capacity market auction is meant to ensure electric system reliability, and is run by PJM Interconnection, the regional transmission organization (RTO) that coordinates the movement of electricity in all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia.

BGE customers are paying for the increased costs over three months in the fall of 2025 and three months in the spring of 2026. Pepco and Delmarva Power customers are seeing the increases starting with their August bills, and Potomac Edison customers with their October bills. SMECO customers are seeing increases starting June 1. See below for more detail about these charges and what OPC is doing about them.

Maryland Matters has explained the issue in detail in their article *Despite efforts by lawmakers, energy bills are going up again. Here’s why.*²

This bill will place some guardrails to protect Maryland energy consumers by prohibiting certain electric, gas, and gas and electric companies from initiating a proceeding that may lead to a rate change unless the company provides customers with a certain notice; requiring certain electric, gas, and gas and electric companies to include a certain statement in each customer bill and automatic payment e-mail and distribute a certain annual rate report in a certain manner; requiring the Public Service Commission, in consultation with the Office of People's Counsel, to develop a certain report; etc.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass HB0540.

¹ <https://opc.maryland.gov/Rising-Fall-Electricity-Rates>

² <https://marylandmatters.org/2025/06/05/utility-bill-rate-increases-june-1/>

HB 0540 – Investor Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas an

Uploaded by: Danna Blum

Position: UNF



February 6, 2026

Environment and Transportation
Delegate Marc Korman
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: HB 0540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Cost Recovery
– Limitations - **Oppose**

Dear Delegate Korman:

While the Chamber appreciates the General Assembly's focus on energy affordability and accountability, SB0002 would undermine Maryland's economic competitiveness, workforce stability, and energy reliability, while departing from long-standing regulatory practices that already provide strong oversight.

HB540 Creates a Competitive Disadvantage - The bill imposes compensation and cost-recovery restrictions not applied to any other Maryland industry or to utilities in neighboring states. No state in the nation mandates how investor-owned utilities must structure employee compensation, placing Maryland at a competitive disadvantage.

Utilities rely on highly skilled engineers, cybersecurity specialists, line workers, and system operators. Restricting performance-based compensation would hinder recruitment and retention, increase turnover and reliance on contractors, and risk slower restoration and higher long-term costs. Incentive compensation represents less than 1% of the average residential bill—about \$1.70 per month—yet is essential to maintaining reliability.

HB540 Overrides Proven Oversight - Maryland's Public Service Commission already conducts rigorous, evidence-based reviews of utility costs and compensation. SB0002 would limit the PSC's discretion and replace an effective regulatory framework with a rigid legislative mandate.



A Concerning Signal to Maryland Businesses - At a time when Maryland is working to strengthen its economy, SB0002 signals potential state intervention in internal compensation decisions, creating uncertainty that discourages investment and job growth.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of nearly 700 members, opposes this bill. We therefore request that you give this bill an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike McMullin".

Mike McMullin
President
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Delegate Chris Tomlinson
Senator Justin Ready

HB 540_MDCC_Public Service Company Transparency Ac

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: UNF



House Bill 540

Date: February 10, 2026

Committee: House Environment & Transportation

Position: Unfavorable

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 540 (HB 540) would require investor owned electric and/or gas companies, before initiating a proceeding that may result in a rate change, to provide advance notice to customers through a bill insert or email; requiring those companies to include specified statements in customer bills and automatic payment notifications; requiring the distribution of an annual rate report to all customers; requiring the Public Service Commission, in consultation with the Office of People's Counsel, to develop the rate report.

While we support transparency and clear communication with ratepayers, HB 540 as drafted would impose significant new costs on Maryland utilities and ratepayers and create requirements that are unworkable under existing Public Service Commission (PSC) procedures.

HB 540 appears to apply to *all* rate changes, including rider adjustments and supply charge changes, not just base rate cases. Some initial estimates to comply with bill-insert requirements under this interpretation could cost ratepayers approximately \$18 million annually, with additional costs associated with developing and mailing the required annual rate report. These costs would ultimately be recovered through customer rates, directly conflicting with the legislature's focus on affordability.

The bill also requires utilities to provide customers with procedural dates and PSC website information *prior* to initiating a rate proceeding. This is not feasible, as procedural schedules and docket numbers are not established until after a case is filed. Additionally, while email notification is contemplated, utilities do not have reliable email contact information for all customers due to frequent account changes and incomplete data.

In order to improve transparency without imposing unnecessary costs, we respectfully suggest clarifying that the bill applies only to base rate cases, reconsidering the annual report mailing requirement, and aligning notice provisions with existing PSC processes.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on **HB 540**.

HB0540_WGL_Crossley_Attachment 1_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Nakhia Crossley

Position: UNF

ORDER NO. 92110

Washington Gas Light Company’s
Application for Authority to Increase
Rates and Charges for Natural Gas
Services

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BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF MARYLAND

Case No. 9849

Issue Date: December 29, 2025

**ORDER INITIATING DOCKET, SUSPENDING TARIFF REVISIONS, AND
SCHEDULING PREHEARING CONFERENCE**

On December 29, 2025,¹ Washington Gas Light Company (“Washington Gas” or the “Company”) submitted to the Commission an application for authority to increase its existing rates and charges and to revise the terms and conditions applicable to gas service in its Maryland service territory pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Public Utilities Article (“PUA”) §§ 4-203, 4-204, (“Application”). In support of its Application, Washington Gas also filed supporting testimony, exhibits, data required by the Commission’s general filing requirements, and the proposed rate schedule to be effective July 27, 2026.

Washington Gas proposes an increase in its annual base rate revenues by \$82.5 million, with an incremental increase of \$67.1 million after the inclusion of the Company’s Commission-approved Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement (“STRIDE”) revenue requirements. Washington Gas’ proposed rate design would result in an average residential customer experiencing an approximate 5.3% increase in their total bill.

¹ Maillog No. 325684.

Pursuant to *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Public Utilities Article, §4-204, the Commission concludes that the proposed rates filed by Washington Gas on December 29, 2025 should be suspended for a period of not more than 180 days from January 28, 2026. The suspension period is necessary to provide the Commission with an opportunity to determine the justness and reasonableness of the proposals.

A prehearing conference in this matter is hereby set for Tuesday, January 27, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m., in the Frank O. Heintz Hearing Room, William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. The purpose of the hearing is to set a procedural schedule for this proceeding, consider any petitions to intervene that have been filed, and consider any other preliminary matters requested by the parties. Petitions to intervene shall be filed by Friday, January 23, 2026. Furthermore, discovery commences immediately for Washington Gas, the Commission’s Technical Staff (“Staff”), and the Maryland Office of People’s Counsel (“OPC”).

IT IS, THEREFORE, this 29th day of December in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Six, by the Public Service Commission of Maryland, **ORDERED:**

(1) that proceedings to consider the Application and the justness and reasonableness of Washington Gas Light Company’s proposed rates, terms, and conditions of its tariff revisions are hereby instituted by the Commission;

(2) that, pursuant to PUA § 4-204(b)(2), the tariff revisions filed by Washington Gas are suspended for an initial period of 180 days from January 28, 2026 with a rate effective date of July 27, 2026;

(3) that discovery commences immediately for Washington Gas, Staff, and OPC;

(4) that interested parties shall file petitions to intervene by January 23, 2026;

(5) that Washington Gas is hereby directed to cause a display advertisement to be published in a newspaper(s) in general circulation throughout its service area at least two times prior to January 23, 2026, that includes a description of the matter on which the prehearing conference is being held and the time, date, method, and purpose of the prehearing conference scheduled for January 27, 2026. The notice shall also advise persons who seek to intervene in this proceeding that any petition to intervene shall be e-filed² by January 23, 2026, with Andrew S. Johnston, Executive Secretary, Maryland Public Service Commission, William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202;

(6) that Washington Gas shall file proof of publication on or before the date of the prehearing conference;

(7) that Washington Gas also shall place on its home page a notice of the prehearing conference and the date by which petitions to intervene in the matter must be filed in a manner that a customer need not click the link to determine the date, time, method, and purpose of the prehearing conference or the date by which a petition to intervene must be filed; and

(8) that Washington Gas is directed to employ any routinely used social media platforms, such as Twitter or Facebook, and any other means of communication at its disposal to further notify its customers of the prehearing conference, as appropriate.

By Direction of the Commission,

/s/ Andrew S. Johnston

Andrew S. Johnston
Executive Secretary

² Details of the “E-file” system can be found on the Commission’s website, www.psc.state.md.us.

HB0540_WGL_Crossley_Attachment 2_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Nakhia Crossley

Position: UNF

January 23, 2026

Via Electronic Filing

Andrew S. Johnston, Esq.
Executive Secretary
Public Service Commission of Maryland
6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: Case No. 9849 – Proof of Publication of Notice of Prehearing Conference

Dear Mr. Johnston:

Pursuant to the Commission' Order No. 92110 scheduling a prehearing conference for January 27, 2026, Washington Gas Light Company certifies that it published notice of the hearing as follows:

- (a) In the main edition of the Washington Post (Full Run in MD, DC, VA) on January 13, 2026;
- (b) In the local living section of the Washington Post (Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Southern Maryland, and outer ring Maryland editions (covering Anne Arundel, Howard and Frederick counties) on January 15, 2026;
- (c) In the Frederick News-Post on January 2, 2026 and January 9, 2026; and
- (d) In the Prince George's Enquirer-Gazette on January 9, 2026 and January 16, 2026.

Washington Gas is also enclosing copies of its website and social media posts, which were made available beginning on January 13, 2026.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Spencer Nichols
Assistant General Counsel

AD# 12509458

WASHINGTON GAS

Size 2 CO x 3.750 IN

Class LLMDZ LLMD

Authorized by Gabriela Linares

Account 2010313032

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

The Washington Post

The Washington Post Company hereby certifies that it is the publisher of The Washington Post; that The Washington Post is a newspaper of general circulation, published daily in the City of Washington, District of Columbia; that The Washington Post has been so published continuously for more than one year prior to the date of first publication of the notice mentioned below; that the undersigned person is the duly authorized agent of The Washington Post Company to execute this certificate on its behalf; and that a notice of which the annexed is a true copy was printed and published in said newspaper on the following date (s) at a cost of \$1,074.08, and was circulated in the Washington metropolitan area.

Published 1 time (s). Date(s): 15th of January 2026

Witness my hand and official seal this 16th day of January 2026

for Patton
My commission expires 8/31/28



Home Sales

HOMES FROM 11

RIVA AREA

Glen Isle Rd., 2800, \$455,000.

SEVERN AREA

Amalfi Lane, 7811, \$507,000.
Chatfield Terr., 1815, \$332,500.
Durness Ct., 8208, \$275,000.
Hillwood Ct., 1807, \$370,000.
Kilmory Ct., 8203, \$285,000.
Pride Tree Cir., 1404, \$625,000.
Severn Rd., 1554, \$385,000.
Twin Oaks Rd., 7748, \$575,000.

SEVERNA PARK AREA

Heavitree Lane, 517, \$700,000.
Norwich Rd., 517, \$385,000.
Trenton Ave., 757, \$515,000.

SHADY SIDE AREA

Avalon Blvd., 1216, \$315,000.

TRACYS LANDING AREA

Eleanore Ave., 6615, \$525,000.

HOWARD COUNTY

These sales data recorded by the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation were provided by Black Knight Inc.

CENTENNIAL-BENSON AREA

Bethany Lane, 3059, \$400,000.
Duff Ct., 9367, \$725,000.
German Rd., 10059, \$1.25 million.
Hickorymede Dr., 3042, \$735,000.
Queensland Dr., 2641, \$665,000.
Verona Pl., 2512, No. A, \$554,930.
Westmount Pkwy., 3706, \$1.29 million.

CLARKSVILLE AREA

Simpson Rd., 11988, \$800,000.

COLUMBIA (EAST) AREA

Basket Ring Rd., 9644, \$365,000.
Campfire, 6147, \$685,000.

Hickory Log Cir., 7421, \$428,000.
Meadows Lane, 6413, \$852,000.
Quiet Times, 6135, \$370,000.
Wandering Way, 9524, \$458,000.

COLUMBIA (WEST) AREA

Grand Banks Rd., 5961, \$370,000.
Hesperus Dr., 5410, \$462,500.
Lake Circle Ct., 5024, \$635,000.
Rutland Round Rd., 10208, No. 73, \$540,000.
Windstream Dr., 10285, \$445,000.

ELKRIDGE AREA

Bonnie View Lane, 5887, \$555,000.
Deep Falls Way, 7172, No. 218, \$425,000.
Sandpiper Ct., 6271, No. 8, \$315,000.

ELLCOTT CITY AREA

Chatfield Lane, 7779, \$490,000.
Forest Hill Dr., 8101, \$500,000.
Grove Angle Rd., 8350, \$533,500.
Marybeth Way, 8533, \$465,000.
Springway Rd., 8516, \$830,000.

FULTON AREA

Gunnar Dr., 8225, \$1.43 million.
Reservoir Rd., 8657, \$1.45 million.

HANOVER AREA

Islip Way, 7212, No. A, \$515,000.

HIGHLAND AREA

Santa Maria Ave., 6851, \$1.88 million.

KINGS CONTRIVANCE VILLAGE AREA

Early Spring Way, 9756, \$437,500.
Ridgeview Dr., 9440, \$590,000.

MARRIOTTSVILLE AREA

Barnsley Way, 11269, \$915,000.
Kirkleigh Dr., 11560, \$391,870.

SCAGGSVILLE-LAUREL AREA

Asher Ct., 8604, \$751,065.
Decatur Rd., 9301, \$360,000.
Hines Cir., 8704, \$919,215.
McGill Ct., 8357, \$899,905.
Volpe Ct., 8703, \$349,580.

WOODBINE AREA

Daisy Rd., 3710, \$565,000.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

These sales data recorded by the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation were provided by Black Knight Inc.

ASHTON AREA

Tree Lawn Dr., 17817, \$620,000.

ASPEN HILL AREA

Fox Valley Dr., 3913, \$1.15 million.
Manor Lake Dr., 15125, \$810,000.
Parkvale Rd., 14105, \$665,000.

BETHESDA AREA

Balfour Dr., 9420, \$1.11 million.
Burdette Rd., 8300, No. 528, \$1.95 million.
Fernwood Rd., 9110, \$2.4 million.
Johnson Ave., 5500, \$2.2 million.
Lone Oak Dr., 6417, \$1.65 million.
Natelli Woods Lane, 7019, \$5.05 million.
Ridge Pl., 8914, \$2.21 million.
Walhonding Rd., 5920, \$2.44 million.
Westlake Terr., 7420, No. 1412, \$235,000.
Wiscasset Rd., 6424, \$3 million.

BOYDS AREA

Dowitcher Way, 14331, \$625,675.
Ethel Rose Way, 13027, \$944,785.

BROOKEVILLE AREA

Gentry Lane, 21601, \$1.1 million.

BURTONSVILLE AREA

McKnew Rd., 14937, \$581,100.

CABIN JOHN AREA

Riverside Dr., 8025, \$872,500.

CALVERTON-COLESVILLE AREA

Clifton Rd., 13125, \$530,000.
Hunters Gate Ct., 25, \$500,000.
Pebble Beach Ct., 13003, \$831,000.

CHEVY CHASE AREA

Bradley Blvd., 4804, No. 200, \$615,000.
Dorset Ave., 5200, \$2.3 million.
Leland St., 3200, \$1.58 million.
Pauline Dr., 3404, \$900,000.
Williams Lane, 3806, \$915,000.

CLOVERLY-EDNOR AREA

Cantrell Rd., 14405, \$613,000.
Watergate Rd., 15304, \$1.2 million.

DAMASCUS AREA

Kings Grove Way, 10150, \$620,000.
Shell Drake Cir., 10023, \$345,100.
Woodfield Rd., 24600, \$400,000.

DERWOOD AREA

Founders Mill Dr., 17411, \$507,000.

DICKERSON AREA

Comus Rd., 16715, \$490,000.

FOUR CORNERS-BURNT MILLS AREA

Carson St., 1109, \$484,900.
Harding Dr., 509, \$530,000.
Sonata Way, 738, \$750,000.

GAITHERSBURG AREA

Amity Cir., 8340, \$380,000.
Brenish Dr., 7302, \$440,000.
Coriander Dr., 7923, No. 12, \$200,000.
Hazelcrest Dr., 17934, \$625,000.
Roundleaf Way, 9125, \$634,900.
Streamside Dr., 18334, No. 302, \$210,000.

GAITHERSBURG-NORTH POTOMAC AREA

Ambiance Dr., 15510, \$1 million.
East Darby Ct., 22, \$483,000.
Grey Colt Dr., 13828, \$514,900.
Longpoint Way, 205, \$650,000.
Mill Green Ave., 165, No. 200, \$530,000.
Quince Orchard Blvd., 864, No. 202, \$207,000.
Quince Orchard Rd., 15703, \$985,000.
Still Creek Lane, 854, \$1.3 million.

GERMANTOWN AREA

Ansel Terr., 13500, \$552,700.
Bridger Dr., 13041, No. 1404, \$422,500.
Cherry Bend Dr., 19021, \$450,710.
Crusader Ct., 5, \$480,000.
Falling Star Rd., 18901, \$850,000.
Ginger Ct., 18722, \$347,000.
Neerwinder Pl., 13315, \$465,000.
Seneca Farm Lane, 14615, \$1.69 million.
Skip Jack Dr., 12110, \$470,000.
Turmeric Ct., 18601, \$250,000.
Willow Spring Cir., 12504, \$460,000.

KENSINGTON AREA

Brookfield Dr., 4218, \$655,000.
Drumm Ave., 10205, \$1.42 million.
Hillsdale Dr., 11115, \$1 million.
West University Blvd., 3333, No. 709, \$205,000.

LAYTONSVILLE AREA

Glendalough Rd., 21716, \$825,000.
Silver Crest Dr., 24913, \$650,000.

MONTGOMERY VILLAGE AREA

Brassie Pl., 19439, No. 201, \$191,000.
Duffer Way, 9509, \$510,000.
Harper Vale Rd., 10004, \$500,185.
Heritage Farm Dr., 7827, \$775,000.
Nature Trail, 9634, \$588,175.
Sailfish Terr., 9839, \$375,000.
Walkers Choice Rd., 18734, No. 3, \$220,000.

NORBECK-LAYHILL AREA

Beaverbrook Ct., 15301, No. 92-3G, \$187,000.
Blue Knob Terr., 2132, \$517,000.
Chesterwood Dr., 4073, \$370,120.
Forest Edge Dr., 3510, No. 16-1C, \$220,000.
Holdridge Rd., 12707, \$580,000.
Interlachen Dr., 15101, No. 1-923, \$279,975.
McKissoon Ct., 14906, No. 8-D-F, \$283,800.
North Leisure World Blvd., 2904, No. 206, \$280,000.
North Leisure World Blvd., 3330, No. 5-203, \$180,000.
Pennfield Cir., 14905, No. 2A, \$280,000.
Rose Trellis Pl., 14804, \$570,000.
Wallingford Rd., 16016, \$740,000.

OLNEY AREA

Buehler Rd., 17801, No. 2-G-7, \$250,000.
Lafayette Dr., 17505, \$700,000.
Shotley Bridge Pl., 17904, \$575,000.

POOLESVILLE AREA

Butler Rd., 17109, \$740,000.

POTOMAC AREA

Barn Wood Lane, 10821, \$1.62 million.
Congressional Pkwy., 9045, \$4.5 million.
Hall Rd., 9708, \$2.27 million.
Lochinvar Lane, 8208, \$1.21 million.
River Rd., 12727, \$1.55 million.
Watts Branch Pkwy., 504, \$860,000.
Woodford Rd., 9914, \$1.69 million.

ROCKVILLE AREA

Braxfield Ct., 12309, No. 447, \$175,000.
Commonwealth Dr., 11319, No. 102, \$490,000.
Dalmatian St., 10235, \$1.11 million.
Earlsgate Lane, 11027, \$1.76 million.
Foxborough Cir., 9958, \$750,000.
Frederick Rd., 16130, No. 30, \$649,990.
Henson Norris St., 2083, No. 100, \$707,140.
Henson Norris St., 2117, No. 117, \$622,740.
Needle Leaf Dr., 6426, \$730,000.
Northrup Dr., 2613, \$1.22 million.
Rose Ave., 930, No. 1106, \$445,000.
Swat St., 14932, No. 2, \$779,345.
Vanderbilt Cir., 10007, No. 2-6, \$375,000.
West Lynfield Dr., 607, \$420,000.

ROLLING GREEN AREA

Dancrest Dr., 12205, \$286,000.
Grey Squirrel St., 12117, \$630,000.

SEE HOMES ON 14

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF MARYLAND

WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO INCREASE RATES AND CHARGES FOR NATURAL GAS SERVICES

CASE NO. 9849

NOTICE OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On December 29, 2025, Washington Gas Light Company filed an application for authority to increase its existing rates and charges and to revise the terms and conditions applicable to gas service in its Maryland service territory.

Washington Gas proposes an increase in its annual base rate revenues by \$82.5 million, with an incremental increase of \$67.1 million after the inclusion of the Company's STRIDE revenue requirements. Washington Gas' proposed rate design would result in an average residential customer experiencing an approximate 5.3% increase in their total bill.

A prehearing conference in this matter is set for Tuesday, January 27, 2026 beginning at 10:00 a.m., in the Frank O. Heintz Hearing Room, William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. The purpose of the hearing is to set a procedural schedule for this proceeding, consider any petitions to intervene that have been filed, and consider any other preliminary matters requested by the parties. Petitions to intervene shall be E-filed by Friday, January 23, 2026 with Andrew S. Johnston, Executive Secretary, Maryland Public Service Commission, William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Details of the "E-file" system can be found on the Commission's website, www.psc.state.md.us.

AD# 12509458

WASHINGTON GAS

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Authorized by Gabriela Linares

Account 2010313032

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

The Washington Post

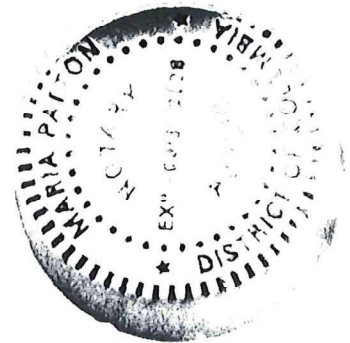
The Washington Post Company hereby certifies that it is the publisher of The Washington Post; that The Washington Post is a newspaper of general circulation, published daily in the City of Washington, District of Columbia; that The Washington Post has been so published continuously for more than one year prior to the date of first publication of the notice mentioned below; that the undersigned person is the duly authorized agent of The Washington Post Company to execute this certificate on its behalf; and that a notice of which the annexed is a true copy was printed and published in said newspaper on the following date (s) at a cost of \$4,500.00, and was circulated in the Washington metropolitan area.

Published 1 time (s). Date(s): 13th of January 2026

Witness my hand and official seal this 16th day of January 2026

Pat Gattay

My commission expires 8/31/28



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Utah pilot program lets AI renew prescriptions

First-in-the-nation trial
aims to improve access
and affordability

BY DANIEL WU

Need to top up your prescription
for asthma medication? If
you're in Utah, you can do it in
minutes from your web browser
for a \$4 fee — without talking to a
doctor.

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artificial intelligence chatbot to
renew some commonly used pres-
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the-nation pilot program. Regula-
tors say the experiment could
inform the future of AI-driven
health care in the state.

The AI service, Doctronic, can
process 30-, 60- or 90-day renew-
als for certain medications that
have already been prescribed by a
licensed provider, according to
the Utah Office of Artificial Intel-
ligence Policy. The service will not
issue new prescriptions or handle
refills for controlled or addictive
substances.

The program's goal is to help
free up doctors to focus on pa-
tient care and make medicine
more accessible and affordable,
the AI policy office said.

Several AI companies have
made forays into providing
health care advice, but the Utah
pilot marks the first time a state
regulator has empowered a chat-
bot to handle prescriptions — a
role long reserved for licensed
health care providers.

The Utah Department of Com-
merce announced the pilot on
Jan. 6 after it quietly launched in
December. A few hundred people
in the state have already used
Doctronic for prescriptions, ac-
cording to the company's found-
ers.

"This is a major milestone to
demonstrate how AI can improve
access to care and health out-
comes," Doctronic co-founder
Matt Pavelle said in a statement.

We hope other states follow
Utah's lead.

Margaret Busse, the executive
director of Utah's Department of
Commerce, said that the state is
"proceeding cautiously" and ap-
proved the trial after months of
research, and that her office
wants to encourage AI innova-
tion.

"We know we have a giant
crisis of affordability in health
care, and if we don't allow technol-
ogy to be able to settle in in
ways that can really help, we're
never going to see the benefits,"
Busse said.

Physician organizations op-
posed the move. The American
Medical Association's CEO and
executive vice president, John
Wythe, cautioned against auto-
mating health care processes.
Physicians should "remain at the
forefront of decision-making and
to validate AI outputs to ensure
accuracy and patient safety," he



Utah's agreement with the AI company Doctronic lets it renew existing prescriptions for about 200 commonly prescribed drugs.

said in a statement.

"While AI has limitless oppor-
tunity to transform medicine for
the better, without physician in-
put it also poses serious risks to
patients and physicians alike,"
Wythe added.

"We do not support it and think
it is a bad idea," Michelle McComb,
the CEO of the Utah Medical
Association, wrote to The Washing-
ton Post. "There are so many
good ways you could use AI in
Healthcare but AI should NOT be
making care decisions."

Doctronic launched in 2023
and operates a nationwide tele-
health service using AI. Its site
calls Doctronic a "private and
personal AI doctor" and encour-
ages users to "talk to me just like
you would your regular doctor."

Like most chatbot-powered
health care services, it dispenses
advice but stops short of claiming
to replace the expertise of a hu-
man doctor. Doctronic instead
offers to connect users to an in-
house team of licensed doctors
or create reports that a patient
can take to their physician.

In Utah, Doctronic found regu-
lators willing to let AI go further.

The Beehive State established
its Office of Artificial Intelligence
Policy in 2024 and has been vocal
about welcoming companies to
test applications of AI with state
oversight. Utah has companies
sign "regulatory mitigation
agreements" that temporarily ex-
empt them from certain laws and
penalties.

Doctronic's year-long agree-
ment permits its AI to renew
existing prescriptions for a for-

mulary of about 200 commonly
prescribed drugs. When patients
converse with Doctronic, the
company's chatbot verifies their
identity and the prescribed medi-
cine and dosage, and asks pa-
tients if they're experiencing side
effects or worsened symptoms. A
\$4 fee is charged to cover the cost
of verifying a patient's ID and
retrieving medical records, ac-
cording to Doctronic.

"A doctor is going to ask you the
same questions that the AI does,"
said Adam Oskowitz, Doctronic's
other co-founder. "So it'll feel the
same. ... And then at the end,
instead of having to wait for the
doctor to write the prescription
and send it over, it's just automati-
cally sent to the pharmacist."

Nirav R. Shah, a senior scholar
at Stanford University's School of
Medicine who served as the com-
missioner of the New York State
Department of Health from 2013
to 2014, said he saw Doctronic
and Utah's prescription renewal
trial as a low-risk way to intro-
duce AI into an area of need in
health care.

"If you're in a rural area where
you have to take a half day off
from work to travel, where the
co-pay (for a doctor's visit) is
often more than the medication
itself... those are examples where
there are large disparities in
terms of access to even prescrip-
tion medication refills," Shah
said.

Concerns about using AI to
provide sensitive, life-or-death-
like health care advice often cen-
ter on the tendency of chatbots to
"hallucinate" falsehoods or en-

courage a user to act on bad
information, sometimes with
dangerous results. That has not
stopped chatbots from becoming
a go-to health care resource. More
than 40 million people around
the world use ChatGPT daily for
health information, Astias reported.

(The Washington Post has a
content partnership with Open-
AI, the creator of ChatGPT.)

Oskowitz and Pavelle said the
Utah pilot program's tight param-
eters and Doctronic's internal
safeguards make it less likely that
its AI will hallucinate or make a
dangerous mistake.

"There's no world in which a
person comes to the Doctronic
AI system and says 'Hey, I
need a new prescription, I don't
have one yet. Can you give me
this?'" Pavelle said. "It simply
won't function."

Patients and pharmacists have
the option to request a human
doctor to review a Doctronic pre-
scription decision, Oskowitz said.
Physicians will review Doctronic's
first 250 renewal decisions before
they are submitted to a phar-
macy, according to the com-
pany's agreement with the state.

Doctronic also will submit a
monthly report to Utah's AI pol-
icy office disclosing the number of
prescription renewals accepted
and denied, a random sampling
of prescription applications, and
other data to assess the AI's effec-
tiveness, according to the agree-
ment.

Busse, of the Utah Department
of Commerce, touted Doctronic's
pilot as a model for the state's

attempt to balance regulating AI
and encouraging innovation.
Utah's legislature has passed laws
regulating mental health chat-
bots, how AI handles consumer
financial and biometric data, and
deepfakes. At the same time, the
state has welcomed AI companies
looking to push into licensed
fields.

"It's not just the Wild West,"
Busse said. "There's some protec-
tions in there, but also pathways
for innovation."

Besides Doctronic, Utah has
year-long "regulatory mitigation
agreements" with Dentacast,
which runs an AI-assisted radio-
graph diagnostic tool that can
diagnose certain dental condi-
tions; and ElixiaChat, an AI men-
tal health platform being tested
in Utah schools.

Shah, the former New York
health regulator, is supportive of
the approach.

"I believe that it is our job as
regulators to allow innovation to
happen in a safe and effective
way," he said. "... Were I in New
York at the time and with such an
opportunity, I would have pro-
ceeded [with Doctronic] as well."

If Doctronic's pilot is success-
ful, the data from it could help
Utah lawmakers craft future leg-
islation on AI's role in health care,
according to Busse.

Doctronic's Oskowitz and
Pavelle said they hope to secure
agreements with other states.
Texas last year enacted AI legis-
lation that establishes a regulatory
sandbox program similar to
Utah's that could allow Doctronic
to perform a similar trial there.

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF MARYLAND
WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY
TO INCREASE RATES AND CHARGES FOR NATURAL GAS SERVICES
CASE NO. 9849

NOTICE OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On December 29, 2025, Washington Gas Light Company filed an application for
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conditions applicable to gas service in its Maryland service territory.

Washington Gas proposes an increase in its annual base rate revenues by \$82.5
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Company's STRIDE revenue requirements. Washington Gas' proposed rate design
would result in an average residential customer experiencing an approximate 5.3%
increase in their total bill.

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Commission's website, www.psc.state.md.us.

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The Washington Post

Sen. Warren fields a conversation
with an unlikely caller: Trump

BY MATT VISER
AND LIZ GOODWIN

It was a typical speech for Sen.
Elizabeth Warren. The Massachu-
setts Democrat blamed President
Donald Trump for rising costs that
she said are hurting Americans.
She called him a "wannabe dicta-
tor." She accused him of "doing not
one damn thing" to lower housing
costs and ridiculed him for not
actively supporting legislation
that would encourage more con-
struction.

"Where is Donald Trump? Has
he lifted a finger to move that bill
forward in the House of Represent-
atives?" she asked Monday morn-
ing at the appearance at the Na-
tional Press Club. "He sure knows
how to get on the phone when he
doesn't like what they're doing
over the Epstein files."

Then Trump got on the phone
with her.

The two erstwhile foes discus-
sued housing legislation and the
proposed cap on credit card rates.
It was a "good call" that occurred
spontaneously, White House press
secretary Karoline Leavitt said.

"He heard about the speech and
said, 'Let me call her,'" Leavitt said.

"President Trump has shown a
willingness to pick up the phone
and talk with anyone."
This was, however, the first time
Trump has called Warren,
according to an aide to the sena-
tor. More typically, he has dispar-
aged her left-leaning politics and
derisively called her "Pocahontas"
— revelling in the nickname as
recently as last month — as a way
to mock her claims of Native
American heritage.

So was it a one-off moment of
geniality? Or a more lasting at-
tempt by Trump to forge yet an-
other unusual political alliance? It
is unknown whether they came to
any agreement, or whether Trump
will help push the housing or cred-
it card legislation Warren is back-
ing.

The antipathy between Trump
and Warren goes back years. Dur-
ing an event in the Oval Office in
August, he called her "a mean,
horrible human being" and
claimed her policies had de-
stroyed financial institutions and
put farmers out of business.

"She's a liar and a mean person.
She's a racist," he said. "I watched
her the other night. She's all
hopped up endorsing a commu-
nist in New York City, and she was
all excited and jumping up and
down. She got to take a drug test.
She really does. She's got to take
a drug test. There's no way some-
body can act that way and be
normal."

Trump that day was referring to
her endorsement of Zohran Mam-
dani, who went on to win New
York's mayoral race — and who
had a cordial meeting in the Oval
Office with Trump in December.

In her remarks Monday, Warren
criticized Trump for not doing
more to help working families,
lower housing costs and cap credit
card interest rates.

Warren said in a statement that
she delivered the same message
to Trump after he called her.

"I told him that Congress can
pass legislation to cap credit card
rates if he will actually fight for it,"
she said. "I also urged him to get
House Republicans to pass the

bipartisan ROAD to Housing Act,
which passed the Senate with
unanimous support and would
build more housing and lower
costs."

In a question-and-answer seg-
ment after the speech, Warren was
asked what she thought of
Trump's proposal to cap credit
card interest rates at 10 percent.

"Let's go, I'm ready," she said. "I
have that one written out. We are
ready to move that one in Con-
gress on the Democratic side. And
there's President Trump been?
Missing in action."

Warren also criticized Trump
for not doing more to push for-
ward a bill to encourage more
housing construction that passed
the Senate last year. The House,
under Republican Speaker Mike
Johnson (Louisiana), has not
picked up the Road to Housing
legislation.

Warren said Trump has a "cred-
ibility problem" on the issue of
affordability, which Democrats
will run on in the 2026 midterm
elections. "He's just shooting out
one idea after another and doing
not one damn thing to actually
lower the cost of housing for the
American people," she said.

Much of Warren's speech was
focused on the future of the Demo-
cratic Party, as she urged party
leaders to embrace an economic
populist message and to stop
"sticking up to the rich and power-
ful" by watering down calls to tax
the rich and rein in the power of
large corporations. But she also
called Trump a "wannabe dicta-
tor."

Not long after, he was on the
phone.

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of New Jersey, County of Camden, ss:

Yuade Moore, being first duly sworn, deposes and says: That (s)he is a duly authorized signatory of Column Software, PBC, duly authorized agent of Frederick News-Post, a newspaper printed and published in the City of Frederick, County of Frederick, State of Maryland, and that this affidavit is Page 1 of 1 with the full text of the sworn-to notice set forth on the pages that follow, and that the attachment hereto contains the correct copy of what was published in said legal newspaper in consecutive issues on the following dates:

PUBLICATION DATES:

Jan. 2, 2026

Jan. 9, 2026

NOTICE ID: 1eg3NPdY9Vm8mVPeTFk8

NOTICE NAME: CASE NO. 9849 PREHEARING CONFERENCE

Publication Fee: 365.20

Yuade Moore

(Signed)

SHARONN E THOMAS-POPE
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
My Commission Expires January 23, 2027

VERIFICATION

State of New Jersey
County of Camden

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me on this: 01/09/2026

SM S. R. Poe

Notary Public

Notarized remotely online using communication technology via Proof.

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF MARYLAND WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO INCREASE RATES AND CHARGES FOR NATURAL GAS SERVICES CASE NO. 9849 NOTICE OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On December 29, 2025, Washington Gas Light Company filed an application for authority to increase its existing rates and charges and to revise the terms and conditions applicable to gas service in its Maryland service territory.

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29088 Airpark Drive
Easton, MD 21601

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF : MARYLAND
COUNTY OF: Prince George's County

This is to certify that the annexed legal advertisement has been published in the publications and insertions listed below. "CASE NO. 9849 Notice of Prehearing Con..." was published in the:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| The Enquirer-Gazette | 01/09/26 |
| The Enquirer-Gazette | 01/16/26 |



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President & Publisher

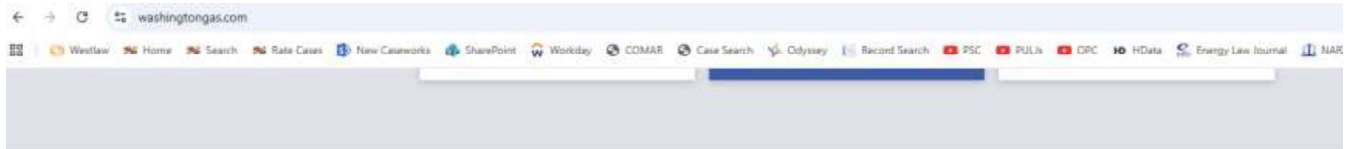
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3096825 EQ 1/9,1/16/2026



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Washington Gas

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A notice to our customers on the upcoming prehearing with the Maryland Public Service Commission:



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**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF MARYLAND
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GAS SERVICES**

CASE NO. 9849

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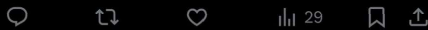
Commission's website, www.psc.state.md.us.





Washington Gas @washington... · 1h

A notice to our customers on the upcoming prehearing with the Maryland Public Service Commission:



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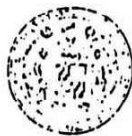
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April 18, 1983

To The Party Addressed:

At the present time, the Commission is considering the adoption of certain filing requirements for use in proceedings which are initiated by the filing of a base rate adjustment application by a public service company whose gross annual revenues exceed \$75,000,000. These additional filing requirements are under consideration as a possible means to expedite Commission proceedings by providing as much relevant data as possible at the beginning of the proceeding and thereby obviating or diminishing the need for subsequent time consuming and costly data requests.

Pursuant to COMAR 20.07.04.07, the Commission currently requires public service companies earning in excess of \$25,000,000 in gross annual Maryland jurisdictional revenues to file the direct testimony and exhibits of their witnesses concurrently with their applications for authority to increase rates and charges. However, the amount of relevant information which is included in prefiled testimony and exhibits varies from company to company and from case to case. Obviously, the sooner all relevant information is provided to the other parties, the sooner those parties will be able to begin the preparation of whatever direct case they determine to be appropriate.

The Commission has reviewed the initial filings which have been made in several recent rate proceedings, as well as the initial data requests which have been occasioned by those filings, and finds that there are certain requests which are typically made in nearly every rate case. For the most part,

these requests are necessary to the preparation of People's Counsel, Staff and Intervenor evidentiary presentations and in nearly all instances have been subsequently responded to by the applicant. Since these data requests are presently being responded to by the applicant during the course of the rate proceedings, it appears that no undue burden would be placed upon these public service companies by requiring them to include this data with their rate increase application.

In general, the Commission is considering a requirement that each applicant file, among other things, various financial and operating reports (e.g., the company's annual report to stockholders, the company's most recent Form 1, etc.); certain financial data (e.g., bond ratings, coverage ratios, AFUDC as a percent of net income, etc.); a listing and an explanation of all rate-making proposals which differ from the treatment which was accorded to that item in the Commission's last rate order; all workpapers and any other material which is necessary to explain and justify each rate-making adjustment; and the detailed calculations underlying various rate base and income items (e.g., the company's proposed cash working capital allowance). Attached to this letter is a list of the data which we believe should be included with one copy of the initial filing and provided to Staff and People's Counsel.

The Commission is also considering whether, if the aforementioned data is provided at the outset of a rate proceeding, it may also be desirable to modify the manner in which rate increase proceedings have heretofore been litigated by the Commission. For example, the filing of such information concurrently with the rate increase application should diminish the volume of subsequent data requests, shorten the time to prepare Staff, People's Counsel and Intervenor evidentiary presentations and obviate the need to use cross-examination as a means of obtaining discovery. Accordingly, once the proposed filing requirements have been implemented, the Commission may employ a procedure whereby all direct, rebuttal and surrebuttal testimony is filed prior to commencement of any hearings. Consecutive days of hearing would then be scheduled for the purpose of providing all parties with an opportunity to cross-examine witnesses for each of the other parties.

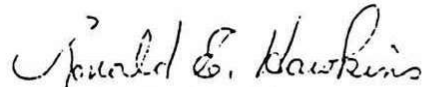
As previously mentioned, the adoption of these revised filing requirements and hearing procedures is intended to expedite the rate-making process, as well as to facilitate the comprehensive investigation of any rate increase proposal. However, before formally proposing the adoption of specific Rules and Regulations implementing these changes, the Commission wishes to informally

April 18,

solicit the views of all interested parties. Accordingly, any party desiring to comment on these possible changes in rate case procedures should submit their comments to the Commission by no later than May 16, 1983.

Although the Commission has not taken any formal action with respect to these guidelines, we would encourage all affected public service companies to comply with these suggested filing requirements in their next rate increase application.

By Direction of the Commission,


Ronald E. Hawkins
Executive Secretary

bam

Enclosure

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INFORMATION TO BE FILED CONCURRENTLY
WITH ANY BASE RATE APPLICATION

In addition to the direct testimony and exhibits of its witnesses, any public service company whose gross annual revenues exceed \$75,000,000 shall file concurrently with its application for a base rate increase the following information:

- I. General Information Concerning the Operations and Financial Condition of the Applicant.
 - A. A copy of latest annual report to stockholders.
 - B. A copy of the most recent statistical supplement to the annual report to the stockholders.
 - C. A copy of the most recent security prospectus (mortgage bonds, debentures, equity, etc.).
 - D. A copy of the most recent "Form No. 1" (electric, gas companies) to FERC or "Form M" (telephone) to FCC.
 - E. A copy of the most recent 10-K report filed with SEC.
 - F. A copy of the most recent quarterly report to stockholders.
 - G. Complete copies of monthly financial and operating reports, showing operating statistics, balance sheets, details of individual balance sheet accounts, operating income statements and detailed revenue and expense accounts for the most recent 12-month period.
 - H. Information for the test year, for the most recent 12-month period, and for each of the last three calendar years concerning:
 - (a) pre-tax interest coverage ratios, including a definition of the components of this ratio.
 - (b) after-tax fixed charge coverage ratios, including a definition of the components of this ratio.
 - (c) coverage ratios for bond indenture purposes, including a definition of this ratio.

- (d) a history of bond ratings by Standard & Poor's and Moody's for the last three years, including current ratings.
 - (e) AFUDC as percent of net income, including the calculations underlying this percentage.
 - (f) coverage of common cash dividends by cash earnings, including the calculations underlying this coverage figure.
 - (g) monthly market-to-book ratios for the most recent 12 months.
 - (h) provide the same information as in (a), (b), (c) and (e) above for the year that new rates will be effective, assuming no rate relief from the case at hand.
1. A copy of the company's most recently prepared five- or ten-year construction budget, showing at a minimum:
 - (a) description of all construction items within each of the major construction categories (construction categories being, for example, "Production", "Transmission", etc.).
 - (b) anticipated construction expenditures for each of the above items for each of the next five or ten years.
 - J. A summary statement listing in detail what rate base components/adjustments and operating revenue and expense components/adjustments included in test year results deviate or are not consistent with the Commission's decision and order regarding the company's prior base rate proceeding.
 - K. A summary statement of past and anticipated changes, since the previous rate case, in major accounting procedures.
 - L. A listing and explanation of all nonrecurring, abnormal or extraordinary expenses incurred in the test year which cannot reasonably be expected to be present in future years.
 - M. A copy of the most recent C&P of Maryland Statistical Manual (for telephone companies only).

- N. The detailed workpapers showing and explaining calculations supporting all proposed rate-making adjustments, with a comprehensive narrative explanation of each adjustment. There shall be a clear audit trail within the workpapers and to the filed testimony and exhibits.

II. Information Concerning the Applicant's Proposed Rate Base.

- A. Comparative balance sheets (showing all uniform system of account balance sheet accounts) for the test year and for each of the prior two calendar years.
- B. Information concerning plant (property) held for future use:
 - (a) A detailed breakdown of components, including associated dollar amounts.
 - (b) The date of initial acquisition and intended purpose at that time.
 - (c) The current intended plan and purpose.
 - (d) The expected in-service date.
- C. Information concerning fuel stock and gas stored, including the test year's average inventory quantity (Bbls; tons; Mcf's, etc.). Also, provide such average inventory quantities for the most recent three calendar years.
- D. A copy of complete working capital lead-lag study.
- E. Information concerning test year CWIP and associated AFUDC (electric/gas) or IDC (telephone) including:
 - (a) AFUDC (IDC) accrual rate employed, on a monthly basis.
 - (b) Specific basis for AFUDC (IDC) accrual rate. Show computations.
 - (c) AFUDC (IDC) accrual rate used in prior year, on a monthly basis, as well as anticipated near-future accrual rate.
 - (d) Is AFUDC taken on AFUDC? If so, how frequently does this compounding take place? (monthly, semi-annually, etc.?)

(e) On a monthly basis for the test year show: (1) total CWIP balance, (2) CWIP balance accruing AFUDC (IDC), (3) CWIP balance not accruing AFUDC (specify exactly what this CWIP represents and why it does not accrue AFUDC), (4) AFUDC accrual rate, and (5) resulting monthly AFUDC by applying accrual rate to AFUDC-accruing CWIP.

- F. The detailed components, including dollar amounts, of the test year's average prepayment balance.
- G. The detailed components, including dollar amounts, of the test year's average working fund balance.
- H. The minimum and compensating bank balance requirements during the test year and currently in effect. Show all involved banks, associated balance requirements (amounts and percentages), the purpose of such balances, and the extent to which such balances are satisfied by disbursement float.
- I. The bank fees paid during the test year. In supplying these bank fees, show the specific banks involved, the associated fees paid and the purpose of such bank fees.
- J. Supporting workpapers showing all detailed calculations underlying all pro forma rate base adjustments. Workpapers should also include brief narrative explaining the detailed calculations if not self-evident.

III. Information Concerning the Applicant's Net Operating Income.

- A. Comparative operating expenses (showing all uniform system of account expense accounts) for the test year and for each of the last two calendar years.
- B. A summary statement explaining all the timing differences that are currently being normalized for tax purposes and all of the timing differences that are currently being flowed through for tax purposes.
- C. A schedule showing in detail the computations of the test year federal income taxes. This schedule should show all "additions and deductions" to book results, all deferred taxes, ITC generated, ITC amortization, and the resultant current federal income taxes.

In addition, a detailed breakdown of the deferred taxes should be provided in this schedule, showing the exact deferred tax components.

- D. On a monthly basis for the test year and for each of the two prior years, provide the following information:
- (a) billed revenues
 - (b) uncollectible accrual amount
 - (c) uncollectible rate per \$100 of revenue
 - (d) actual write-off amount
 - (e) actual write-off rate per \$100 of revenue
 - (f) reserve balance
- E. A schedule showing for the test year and for each of the last two calendar years, an analysis of gains and losses on the sales of property. This analysis should show all individual sales with their corresponding dollar gains/losses.
- F. The total amount and a breakdown of the major components making up the estimated rate case expenses for the case at hand.
- G. The actual rate case expenses, broken down by major components, incurred for the prior base case proceeding.
- H. The rate case expenses (distinguished by case no.) included in test year operating expenses.
- I. On a monthly basis, the number of full-time equivalent employees (separate by management and non-management) during the test year and the prior year as well as from the end of the test year until to date.
- J. For the test year operating results, a reconciliation of the fuel clause revenues included in operating revenues and the fuel costs included in operating expenses (for electric and gas companies only).
- K. The detailed components and corresponding dollar amounts for the "other income" account during the test year and during each of the last two calendar years.
- L. The detailed components and corresponding dollar amounts for the test year total interest expenses.

M. A statement as to whether the following expenses have been included as "above the line" or "below the line" test year expenses:

- (a) contributions/donations
- (b) lobbying expenses
- (c) memberships/dues

If any of such expenses have been included as "above the line" expenses, provide a schedule showing the type of expenses and associated dollar amounts, including all detailed memberships, contribution recipients, etc.

N. The interest rate paid on customer deposits.

O. A schedule showing all advertising expenses included in the test year as well as for each of the last two calendar years. Advertising expenses should be broken out by the functional categories as specified by Commission Rule IV C.

P. With regard to test year production maintenance, a schedule showing a description of major maintenance projects during the test year by generation station in the following format (electric utilities only):

| <u>Station/Unit</u> | <u>Work Description</u> | <u>Outage Days</u> | <u>Maintenance Expense Amount</u> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| XXX | XXXXX | XXX | \$XXXX |

Q. On a monthly basis as well as on a total annual basis, the test year heating-degree days and cooling-degree days.

In addition, provide the normal heating- and cooling-degree days experienced in company's service area (for gas and electric companies only).

R. The actual amount of "storm damage" expenses incurred during test year. In addition, provide the actually experienced storm damage expenses during each of the last 10 years.

S. For the test year and for each of the last two calendar years, the detailed components and associated dollar amounts included in the following Administrative and General expense accounts (electric and gas utilities only):

- Account 923 - outside services employed
- Account 930.1 - general advertising expense
- Account 930.2 - miscellaneous general expense

- T. A statement of all legal expenses (broken down by major categories) included in test year expenses as well as in each of the last two calendar years.
- U. A breakdown of test year "taxes other than income taxes", including components and associated dollar amounts.
- V. On a monthly basis and on a total annual basis, the following information by customer classification or tariff class should be provided (for electric and gas utilities only):
 - (a) number of customer during the test year and from the end of the test year to date.
 - (b) test year unit sales (kWh's, Mcf's, Dth's, etc.).
 - (c) test year billed revenues.
 - (d) test year fuel clause revenues included in (c) above.
- W. The line losses (percent of total output) and/or unaccounted for gas (percent of total output) for the test year as well as actually experienced during the last five calendar years (electric and gas companies only).
- X. All revenues, expense and tax bookings included in unadjusted per books test year results that relate to periods prior to the test year. Identify all specific bookings.
- Y. Supporting workpapers showing all detailed calculations underlying all pro forma income adjustments. Workpapers should also include brief narrative explaining the detailed calculations if not self-evident.

IV. Information Concerning Applicant's Cost of Capital.

1. Summary of Short-term Debt.

- A. The following data shall be provided for existing short-term debt (consolidated, partially consolidated or other) during the test year and on the last day of the test year:
 - (a) Type of instrument, term, maturity date and holder;
 - (b) Amount outstanding;

- (c) Applicable interest rate;
 - (d) Annualized interest requirement;
 - (e) Composite cost rate for total short-term debt;
 - (f) Standby fee and/or compensating balances, if any, currently required. Also indicate whether required by formal contractual agreement or by informal understanding;
 - (g) Lines of credit and principal lending institutions for the current calendar year and subsequent year; and
 - (h) Average historical daily cash balances as recorded on the books of the utility, by bank, for the most recent 12-month period where such balances are used to meet line of credit requirements.
2. Summary of Embedded Cost of Long-term Debt.
- A. The following data shall be provided on existing long-term debt (consolidated, partially consolidated or other) during the test year and on the last day of the test year:
- (a) Type and coupon rate of issue;
 - (b) Date issued;
 - (c) Maturity date;
 - (d) Original principal amount issued;
 - (e) Face amount outstanding;
 - (f) Unamortized discount or premium, and description of amortization method;
 - (g) Carrying value, net of outstanding amount, unamortized discount or premium and expenses;
 - (h) Annualized interest cost;
 - (i) Composite embedded cost rate;
 - (j) Price to public (including discount/premium);
 - (k) Annualized amortization of underwriting expenses;

- (l) Proceeds to utility before corporate expenses;
 - (m) Corporate expenses; and
 - (n) Unamortized balance of underwriting expenses.
- B. A schedule will be provided showing amounts of outstanding debt instruments which were reacquired by market purchase, the amounts paid for such reacquired debt instruments, the dates of reacquisition, the gains or losses realized, and the method of accounting for the reacquired debt and gains or losses resulting from reacquired debt.
3. Summary of Embedded Cost of Preferred Stock.
- A. The following data shall be provided for outstanding preferred stock during the test year and on the last day of the test year:
- (a) Type, dividend rate, par value;
 - (b) Date issued;
 - (c) Par value outstanding;
 - (d) Premium;
 - (e) Issue expense;
 - (f) Net proceeds after premium and issue expense;
 - (g) Annualized dividends;
 - (h) Embedded cost rate; and
 - (i) Summary of stock provisions as to convertability, redemption, sinking fund, preference provisions, and penalties in event of default.
4. Information Concerning Common Stock.
- A. The following common stock data shall be provided for the most recent historical period and on an actual basis for each of the preceding ten (10) calendar years except as noted:
- (a) Shares outstanding - year-end;
 - (b) Shares outstanding - weighted, with description of weighting method;

- (c) Net income for equity per share, on year-end basis and weighted basis;
- (d) Dividends paid per share, and date of payment, dividends declared per share and date of declaration, and ex-dividend date;
- (e) Market price per share, high and low for each quarter;
- (f) Book value in total dollars on a year-end and on a weighted share basis separated as to the following:
 - (1) Par or stated value;
 - (2) Capital surplus;
 - (3) Earned surplus;
 - (4) Other (describe); and
 - (5) Total of (1) through (4).
- (g) Growth in total book value per share year-end, and growth in book value per share year-end from retained earnings;
- (h) For major issues, the following data:
 - (1) Number of shares issued;
 - (2) Stock issue method, whether by rights, direct offer or other method;
 - (3) Date of issue;
 - (4) Price received (net);
 - (5) Financing costs; and
 - (6) A narrative description of any stock issue methods other than public sales including provisions for purchase relating to qualifications, differentials from market prices or par values and maximum and minimum amounts allowed to be subscribed.
- (i) For minor or continuing issues such as Employee Stock Option Plan or Dividend Reinvestment Plan, the number of shares and amount received; and

- (j) The date of any formal presentation to securities analysts or rating agencies within the last twelve (12) months. Make available for inspection copies of all formal prepared reports distributed to the public in connection with such presentations and a listing of documents distributed in support of such presentations for which privilege or confidentiality is asserted.

V. A Copy of the Applicant's Most Recent Jurisdictional and Class Cost-of-Service Studies (both embedded and marginal cost-based studies).

- A. Each cost-of-service study which is filed by the applicant should be sufficiently complete to permit replication of the company's results.
- B. Each cost-of-service study should include functionalized and classified accounts by FERC account number and a listing of all externally generated allocation factors.
- C. The applicant shall provide load data for the year of the cost-of-service study consisting of:
 - (a) monthly class and jurisdictional peaks (both coincident with the system peak and the noncoincident peaks).
 - (b) class and jurisdictional load and diversity factors.
 - (c) the daily system peaks for each day of the year.
 - (d) a load duration list for the system.

HB0540_WGL_Crossley_UNF.pdf

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Position: UNF



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COMMITTEE: ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY ON: INVESTOR-OWNED ELECTRIC, GAS, AND GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANIES - UTILITY RATE CHANGES (PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY TRANSPARENCY ACT)

POSITION: OPPOSE

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2026 AT 1:00 P.M.

WASHINGTON GAS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITS THIS STATEMENT IN **OPPOSITION** TO **HOUSE BILL 540 - INVESTOR-OWNED ELECTRIC, GAS, AND GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANIES - UTILITY RATE CHANGES (PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY TRANSPARENCY ACT)**

Commitment to Transparency

Washington Gas Light Company (“WGL” or “Company”) acknowledges its obligation to provide adequate and timely information with its customers that informs them of pending base rate changes and their opportunity to participate in any case docketed by the Public Service Commission (“Commission”).

Customer Notification of Proposed Rate Changes

HB 540 would impose new customer notification requirements on utilities that seek Public Service Commission authorization to change rates. The new requirements include a 10-year rate change trend featuring a visual graphic of rate changes over the prior 10 years; a break-out of costs associated with transmission, distribution and standard-offer or commodity service; an accounting of all customer bill line items including rate riders; and a 70-word paragraph summarizing the role of the Commission.

HB 540 also would direct the Commission, in consultation with the Office of People’s Counsel (“OPC”), to issue an “annual rate report” for each Maryland utility, to be published on the Commission’s website. HB 540 would require that each Maryland utility distribute its annual rate report to customers and post same on the Commission’s website.

Finally, HB 540 would authorize OPC to bring a case to the Commission if OPC determines that annual rate report published by the Commission includes incorrect or misleading information.

Bill Analysis

HB 540 burdens Maryland’s public service companies with duplicative and unnecessary information-gathering, reporting and notification requirements. The costs associated with the new requirements will be passed on to utility customers, with no corresponding benefit to them.

Existing Law

Under § 4-202 of the Public Utilities Article (“PUA”), a public service company must maintain a tariff – the Commission-approved schedules of rates, terms and conditions – for public inspection at all times. Washington Gas keeps a copy of its tariff at its walk-in offices and posts the tariff on the Company’s webpage.

PUA § 4-203 requires a public service company to provide notice to the Commission of any new rate, or change in rate, at least 30 days before the new rate is established or current rate is changed. The public service company must publish the change in rate for the 30-day period and its notice and publication must plainly set for the changes proposed to the rate schedules currently in force as well as the effective date of the changes. Attachment 1 appended hereto is Order No. 92110 in Order No. 9849, WGL’s pending rate case, which directed the Company to publish at least two (2) notices prior to January 23, 2026, describing the case and the date and time of a prehearing conference.

The Commission’s Rules of Practice and Procedure, COMAR 20.07.04.07, 20.07.04.09 and 20.07.04.10 contain additional filing and notice requirements for utilities proposing to change their rates. Notably, COMAR 20.07.04.10 outlines a specific form of notice that utilities must use to describe their proposed rate changes, and how persons may file written comments with the Commission. A copy of WGL’s most recent rate case notification, in Case No. 9849, is appended hereto as Attachment 2. Further, the Commission formally schedules multiple public hearings, often in the evening, at various locations around a utility’s service area to afford customers the opportunity to learn more about and comment on proposed rate changes.

Finally, in 1983 the Commission adopted guidelines entitled, “INFORMATION TO BE FILED CONCURRENTLY WITH ANY BASE RATE APPLICATION.” These guidelines require a utility filing a base-rate case to provide approximately 160 types of information in a standardized format. The Commission noted that it was adopting the 1983 guidelines “to expedite the rate-making process, as well as to facilitate the comprehensive investigation of any rate increase proposal.” Washington Gas is providing the Commission guidelines as an example of rate-case filing requirements that have served the purposes outlined by the Commission for more than 40 years, as Attachment 3 hereto.

The information HB 540 addresses is readily and transparently available to Maryland utility customers.

Taken together, PUA, COMAR, Commission orders initiating rate cases and scheduling public hearings, and the Commission's 1983 rate case guidelines, compel Maryland utilities to file and make public hundreds of pages of rate information and rate change information, along with instructions on how customers might communicate with or appear before the Commission. This information is routinely shared with Commission Staff, OPC, the Maryland Energy Administration, the federal government via the General Services Administration, and traditional intervenors in WGL's cases. Rate case information is posted on WGL's website ahead of and for the duration of each docketed case.

HB 540's requirement that utilities portray rate case requests in historical and graphical comparisons will likely serve to confuse and even frustrate utility customers. Utility rates are not made in the vacuum of comparison to prior rates. Rather, they are made upon an examination of a public service company's actual cost-of-service as reviewed and established by the Commission, and taking into account federal and state constitutional protections for the utility to recoup its prudent expenditures and to exercise its opportunity to earn a reasonable return upon investment.

Further to the point of customer frustration, as referenced in the Fiscal Note for HB 540, on the date when utilities must send the new notice to customers, the utilities will not know what final rates the Commission will approve 180 days after rate case is filed under PUA 2-204. Thus, the 10-year rate trend report included in a bill insert will be necessarily incomplete or, if the proposed rates are included, misleading.

The annual rate trend report requirement suffers from similar deficiencies, and will not advance customer interests, lower cost, or provide meaningful guidance on the true value of utility service.

HB 540 will not lower utilities' cost-of-service or rates.

HB 540's requirement that utilities provide electronic and hard copy versions of rate case notifications and annual reports will keep upward pressure on the cost of providing utility service in Maryland, and will not serve to lower rates. Incremental costs include:

- Each hard copy bill insert costs a minimum of \$42,0000, covering bill stock, letterhead, impression and insertion costs;
- WGL employee-related processing costs are estimated at \$5000-10,000 per bill insert; and
- WGL employee-related costs if the Commission conducts a substantive review of each bill insert are estimated to total several thousand more dollars; and
- All prudently incurred bill insert costs will be passed on to customers for information they are already provided under PUA, COMAR and Commission orders.

HB 540 gives OPC an unwarranted and legally dubious enforcement role.

As noted above, HB 540 would authorize OPC to bring a case to the Commission if OPC determines that annual rate report published by the Commission includes incorrect or misleading information. This authorization appears to fundamentally change OPC's role from that of the statutory representative for the economic interests of residential ratepayers to a supernumerary overseer of Commission orders or other issuances. This new oversight role for OPC conflicts with PUA § 2-204(a)(3), which provides: "As the Office of People's Counsel considers necessary, the Office of People's Counsel shall conduct investigations and *request* the Commission to initiate proceedings to protect the interests of residential and noncommercial users." (Emphasis added.) And OPC's new responsibility clouds the exclusive authority that Maryland's judiciary enjoys in receiving and ruling on appeals from Commission decisions.

OPC already has the statutory authority to request that the Commission initiate any proceeding that OPC believes involves users' interests. HB 540 only serves to confuse that vital role with that of content overseer.

Closing Recommendation

WGL respectfully requests that the Committee maintain Maryland's existing transparency framework under PUA § 4-203, COMAR and Commission precedent. The Company recommends that interested stakeholders work within current Commission processes rather than layering new statutory requirements that increase costs without measurable customer benefit.

About Washington Gas

Washington Gas Light Company provides safe, reliable natural gas service to more than 1.2 million customers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Washington Gas has been providing energy to residential, commercial, government, and industrial customers for more than 177 years, and currently serves nearly 520,000 Maryland customers in Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles, St. Mary's, Frederick, and Calvert Counties. The Company employs over 600 people within Maryland, as well as hundreds of contractors, plumbers, union workers, and other skilled tradespeople. The Company strives to improve the quality of life in our communities by maintaining a locally-based workforce, working with suppliers that represent and reflect the communities it serves, and giving back through its charitable contributions and employee volunteer activities. The Company, together with other natural gas distribution utilities, are responsible for delivering the primary source of heat to Maryland residential energy consumers, serving approximately one half of all Maryland households while providing critical energy services to residential, commercial, and industrial customers at one-third the cost of electricity on a per unit basis.

Contact:

Nakhia Crossley, Lead Public Policy, Public Affairs, Washington Gas
M 571-683-0334 | nakhia.crossley@washgas.com

ATTACHMENT 1

Case No. 9849 - Order No. 92110

ATTACHMENT 2

Case No. 9849 – WGL Notice of Publication

ATTACHMENT 3

Commission Rate Case Guidelines

HB 540_Chesapeake Utilities_Unfav (02-05-26) (Fina

Uploaded by: Steve Baccino

Position: UNF



February 10, 2026

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

HB 540– Investor Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Statement in Opposition

Chesapeake Utilities of Maryland, Inc. (“Chesapeake”) provides natural gas local distribution service to approximately 33,000 customers across Maryland’s Eastern Shore (including Cecil, Dorchester, Caroline, Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties). Chesapeake respectfully **OPPOSES** HB 540 which would require utilities to meet new notification and reporting requirements before initiating any proceeding that may lead to any rate change. Specifically, HB 540 requires: (1) mandatory advance customer notice (via bill insert or email) **before** a utility changes any rate; (2) utilities to prepare a 10-year rate trend report and distribute it to customers **before** a utility changes any rate – and directs the Office of People’s Counsel (OPC) to file a complaint against a utility if OPC believes the rate report is “misleading;” and (3) utilities to include in every monthly customer bill a specific statement explaining the regulatory jurisdiction of the Maryland Public Service Commission (the “Commission”).

Chesapeake closely scrutinizes all costs it incurs in providing service to our customers to ensure that we are providing the best service at the least cost possible. Respectfully, HB 540 seems to be a solution in search of a problem and should be rejected.

HB 540 is unclear. The legislation requires utilities to notify every one of their customers anytime the utility “initiates a proceeding that may lead to a rate change.” HB 540 could lead to hundreds of unnecessary customer notifications that would serve no useful purpose and needlessly confuse customers. All rates included in a utility tariff must be approved by the Commission. However, not all utility rate changes occur as a result of a formal base rate case proceeding. Each year, utilities regularly request Commission approval to update or adjust hundreds of individual tariffed rates outside the context of a formal rate case.¹ Such individual tariff rate changes are efficient and have been common Commission administrative practice for decades. HB 540 would require utilities to send hundreds of notifications annually to all its customers that would serve no useful purpose.

HB 540 is unnecessary and will increase rates. While transparency matters, these new proposed processes would be costly, unclear, and will likely raise customer bills for the approximately 2 million public utility customers across the state without providing meaningful benefits. Existing Public Service Commission (PSC) regulations already require customer notice, which Chesapeake provides through a variety of methods that are both reasonable and cost-effective. Additionally, all relevant information for a rate proceeding is publicly available on the PSC’s website.

¹ The Commission reviews and rules on many tariff updates/changes during its weekly Administrative Meetings.



Mandating physical mail inserts multiple times a year for every single rate change proceeding, for all the public utilities across the state, will cost tens of millions annually, expenses ultimately borne by customers. These proposed requirements are unnecessary given the current public access to information and current PSC regulations on customer notice. Additionally, many customers do not provide or update email addresses, making email an unreliable tool for mandated rate-change notices.

HB 540 requires duplicative effort. HB 540 would impose duplicative and operationally burdensome administrative requirements. HB 540 would require the PSC, in collaboration with the Office of People’s Counsel, to publish an annual rate-trend report. While some other state utility commissions already produce such reports, and Maryland has done so previously, requiring public utilities to duplicate this reporting would add cost without improving transparency or providing any meaningful customer benefit. Preparing, printing, and mailing millions of rate-trend reports each year across multiple utilities would again cost tens of millions statewide—funds that would come directly from ratepayers. Moreover, HB 540 grants the OPC the authority to bring a case if it believes a rate-trend report is misleading. This OPC enforcement provision is vague (and, therefore, could lead to unnecessary complaints) and we of unaware of any similar provision in any other state law.

In summary, although Chesapeake supports transparency, HB 540 would create significant new administrative burdens and costs that ultimately fall on Maryland customers. The bill duplicates existing PSC practices, imposes costly mailing and reporting mandates, and risks interfering with routine, market-driven price adjustments.

On behalf of Chesapeake, our employees, and their families, who contribute every day to our communities, we respectfully request an unfavorable report for HB 540.

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation
Steve Baccino, Governmental Affairs Director
Contact: sbaccino@chpk.com

FirstEnergy UNFAV ENT - HB540.pdf

Uploaded by: Timothy Troxell

Position: UNF

OPPOSE – House Bill 0540
HB0540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes
(Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Environment and Transportation Committee
Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Potomac Edison, a subsidiary of FirstEnergy Corp., serves approximately 293,000 customers in all or parts of seven Maryland counties (Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington). FirstEnergy is dedicated to safety, reliability, and operational excellence. Its electric distribution companies form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving customers in Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia.

Unfavorable

Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy requests an Unfavorable report on HB-540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act) as drafted. While we appreciate the intent of the bill to enhance customer engagement, rate transparency, and public participation in Public Service Commission (PSC) proceedings -- there are several operational, fiscal, and policy concerns that would create unintended burdens and additional costs without delivering proportional benefits for customers.

Requiring utilities to notify *all* customers of potential rate changes via either bill insert or email poses significant operational and cost challenges. While the goal of informing customers is appropriate, the practical reality is that we do not have email addresses for every customer we serve - nor are customers required to provide one when establishing service. As a result, we would be required to produce a bill insert for every applicable rate filing, even when electronic communication might otherwise have been feasible. Mandatory universal bill inserts introduce substantial recurring operational and printing costs, factored into revenue requirements, and ultimately resulting in increasing electricity rates. We encourage the Committee to consider whether the fiscal note for this bill fully reflects these unavoidable operational impacts.

In HB-540, the definition of “initiating a proceeding that may lead to a rate change” is overly broad, and as written could require customer notifications for any filing that could influence rates. These filings could include routine surcharge updates for programs like EmPOWER Maryland, and other small revisions. These filings are typically technical, non-litigated, and relatively minor - and do not represent the type of distribution base rate cases most customers associate with a “rate change.” To avoid excessive, costly, and ultimately confusing notices - we recommend narrowing the requirement to only base rate case filings or other clearly defined, substantive rate-setting proceedings. This clarification would allow HB-540 to meet its intended goal, without overwhelming customers with frequent, routine notifications.

HB-540 mandates that every customer bill and automatic payment email include instructions on how customers may participate in PSC proceedings. While we support public involvement in meetings, this approach could obscure the statutory role of the Office of People’s Counsel (OPC), which is specifically tasked with representing the interests of residential customers. If this bill were to move forward, we would recommend

revising the language to direct customers to the OPC, so customers can receive accurate guidance on how to engage in the process through the entity designed to represent them.

We find it concerning and confusing that only OPC can challenge the required PSC-issued Annual Rate Report after it has been published. For accuracy and transparency purposes, we suggest utilities be given the opportunity to provide input during the development of the annual report. In addition, the bill should clarify why OPC is granted authority to challenge the report, as this agency is already listed as a contributor in the process of its development. A more collaborative and clearly defined approach would ensure the report is accurate, comprehensive, useful to the public, and not subject to risk of challenge on the basis that it contains incorrect or misleading information after publication.

We share the General Assembly's commitment to ensuring Marylanders have clear, accurate information about utility rates and regulatory proceedings. However, as currently drafted, HB-540 presents operational challenges, unnecessary costs, and ambiguities that could reduce - not enhance - customer understanding and engagement.

For these reasons, Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy respectfully requests an Unfavorable report on HB-540. We do welcome the opportunity to work with the bill sponsor, Committee members, the PSC, and OPC to refine the bill in a way that meets its goals while ensuring practical, cost-effective implementation.

HB540 Information PSC.pdf

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Position: INFO

KUMAR P. BARVE
CHAIR



FREDERICK H. HOOVER, JR.
BONNIE A. SUCHMAN
ODOGWU OBI LINTON
RYAN C. MCLEAN

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Chair Marc Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 540 - Information - Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Public Service Commission (the “Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to provide this informational testimony for HB 540. The bill adds notification and reporting requirements for utilities seeking a rate change before the Commission; requires utilities to add certain language on its customer bills; and requires the Commission to publish an annual rate report for each public service company. The purpose of this testimony is to: 1) inform the Committee of the current notice requirements that apply to rate cases; and 2) inform the Committee of probable impacts this bill will have on ratepayers.

Public Utilities Article § 4-203 outlines the notice requirements for utilities who file for rate changes before the Commission. A utility must provide notice to the Commission at least 30 days prior to a rate taking effect, and it must publish its proposed rate and the rate effective date in a schedule which is readily accessible to and convenient for public inspection for the entire duration of the notice period.

The Commission may suspend the proposed rate for a period of 180 days—or greater, for a multi-year rate plan—in order to determine whether the rate is just and reasonable. During the rate case, the Commission must hold public hearings in the utility’s service area to allow utility customers and other interested persons an opportunity to provide comments. The utility must publish notice of the date, time, and place of the public hearing. This notice is published in a local newspaper of general circulation and the utility’s and Commission’s websites and social media. Utility representatives attend the public comment hearings to provide information about the proposed rate changes. Comments made at the public hearing become part of the record in the rate case.

The current notices to the public provided by utilities and the Commission as described above already communicate some of the important information about the rate case to the public as

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required by this bill. The ten-year rate trend report is a new requirement added by the bill that would provide greater transparency to utility customers about their energy bills.

The Commission would like to note that the bill's requirement that the utilities provide "the relevant procedural dates" for a proceeding prior to filing a case is not possible, as the procedural schedule is necessarily established by the Commission only after a rate case filing is made. The procedural schedule is published by the Commission in the case folder on its website. If the Committee wishes to require the utility to publish a procedural schedule, the Commission would recommend amending the bill to require this notice when it is practicable for the utility to do so.

In terms of the bill's impact on ratepayers, it is likely that the bill would lead to increased expenses being included in customer rates. Utilities are permitted to recover from rates the reasonable costs associated with a rate case and the reasonable costs incurred to provide informational advertising to its customers. Because this bill requires the utility to provide various notices via printed bill inserts or bill statements, the costs of producing those inserts would be included in the expenses a utility recovers from its ratepayers. Additionally, increasing the number of notices or bill inserts being sent to a customer may detract from efforts to ensure customers look at important notices related to safety, demand management, and energy savings programs.

Please contact Niki Wiggins, Director of Legislative Affairs, at irene.wiggins3@maryland.gov if you have any questions related to this informational testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kumar P. Barve".

Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Maryland Public Service Commission

HB540_BGE_LOI_ENT_Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, an

Uploaded by: Guy Andes

Position: INFO



Letter of Information

House Environment &
Transportation Committee
2/10/2026

House Bill 540 – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes (Public Service Company Transparency Act)

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) has concerns with **House Bill 540 (HB 540) – Investor-Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies - Utility Rate Changes**. BGE serves over 2 million customers with safe and reliable energy across Maryland, and we recognize that transparency is important. While HB 540 seeks to enhance transparency around utility rate changes, its proposed provisions will create significant operational, regulatory, and financial challenges, which will lead to additional costs to ratepayers.

HB 540 would require investor-owned electric, gas, and combined utilities to undertake a series of prescriptive actions prior to initiating any proceed that may result in a change in rates. Specifically, the bill mandates that utilities issue public notifications containing the Public Service Commission's (PSC) procedural schedule and publish a comprehensive ten-year rate trend report. This report must include detailed graphical analyses, a breakdown of transmission and distribution cost components, and an accounting of each bill line item and rider.

Today, the PSC issues an order to establish a case docket upon the filing of a rate application, after which a hearing is held to determine the procedural schedule. The utility filing a rate application must provide public notice of this hearing through newspaper advertising, a notice on its web site and social media. Utilities are also required to post all rate filings on their web sites. By contrast, HB 540 would impose these new reporting and disclosure obligations in advance of every rate-related filing. These requirements would create significant administrative burdens for utilities, with the potential to delay routine regulatory processes and divert resources from core functions.

Additionally, the bill also introduces duplicative reporting cycles, requiring the PSC, in consultation with the Office of People's Counsel (OPC), to publish an annual rate report beginning January 1, 2028, for which utilities are required to provide the underlying data. Utilities will be required to send a bill insert that includes this annual report to all their retail customers and post the report on their website. This will lead to additional costs borne by the ratepayers for the increase in postage associated with the delivery of the report with their monthly bill.

Lastly, HB 540's prescriptive requirement that each customer bill and automatic payment email include specified information regarding the purpose and mission of the PSC would impose additional financial burdens on ratepayers. Implementing this mandate would necessitate redesigning existing bill formats to incorporate the required disclosures. BGE currently utilizes

BGE, headquartered in Baltimore, is Maryland's largest gas and electric utility, delivering power to more than 1.3 million electric customers and more than 700,000 natural gas customers in central Maryland. The company's approximately 3,300 employees are committed to the safe and reliable delivery of gas and electricity, as well as enhanced energy management, conservation, environmental stewardship and community assistance. BGE is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), the nation's largest energy delivery company.

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approximately 10 bill image templates, each tailored to reflect the customer's specific services and applicable tariff. Modifying this full suite of bill formats would require substantial system updates and redesign efforts, the costs of which would ultimately be borne by customers.

Transparency and consumer empowerment are essential objectives that BGE supports. However, in evaluating any reforms, it is necessary to consider the potential for unintended financial impacts and administrative burdens on utilities and, ultimately, on the customers they serve. Any regulatory changes should balance the goal of enhancing public access to information with the practical costs and operational implications of implementing such requirements.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Marylanders' energy affordability and resilience.

HB540-LOI 2.10.pdf

Uploaded by: Poetri Deal

Position: INFO



February 10, 2025

112 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Letter of Information – Investor–Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Utility Rate Changes

Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco), and Delmarva Power & Light Company (Delmarva Power) submit this letter of information on House Bill 540 -**Investor–Owned Electric, Gas, and Gas and Electric Companies – Utility Rate Changes**. HB 540 would, unless otherwise ordered by the Public Service Commission (PSC), prohibit certain investor-owned public service companies from initiating a proceeding that may lead to a rate change, prepare and publish a 10- year rate report, and include standardized bill inserts and statements about the mission of the PSC and how customers can participate in rate proceedings. We understand the legislative intent to improve transparency and engagement, and we share that goal.

PHI utilities are regulated by the Public Service Commission. We already operate under robust transparency and customer notice requirements and practices. Maryland regulations require electric and gas customer bills to include detailed information – such as usage, meter readings, rate schedule identification, applicable surcharges, payment due date, late-fee disclosures, and clear contact information for billing inquiries. Additionally, once a rate case is filed and the PSC opens a docket, customers already have a myriad of opportunities – over an extended process that often spans 10 months to participate and engage in the proceeding. While the procedural schedule is established by the Public Service Commission, we engage customers throughout the case through outreach, public forums, dedicated rate case webpage, and social media.

HB 540 requires pre-filing customer notice to include relevant procedural dates and where to find information on the PSC website. However, as the fiscal and policy note explains, procedural schedules are generally established after a case is filed and the Commission issues a notice and holds a hearing to set the procedural schedule—meaning utilities will not have those dates at the time of the filing.

HB 540 specifies that the 10-year rate trend report must include a visual depiction of the 10-year rate change trend and must identify costs associated with transmission, distribution, and standard-offer or commodity service, and account for all customer bill line items, including rate riders. Combining these components in a single “trend” product can be complex for customers, since different bill elements may be driven by different factors and may not change the same cadence.

Pepco and Delmarva Power appreciate the Committee’s attention to transparency and customer participation.

Amber Perry | Anne Klase | Allyson Black-Woodson | Poetri Deal | 410 980 5347

Exelon (Nasdaq: EXC) is a Fortune 200 company and the nation’s largest utility company, serving more than 10.5 million customers through six fully regulated transmission and distribution utilities — Atlantic City Electric, BGE, ComEd, Delmarva Power, PECO, and Pepco. Exelon’s 20,000 employees dedicate their time and expertise to supporting our communities through reliable, affordable and efficient energy delivery, workforce development, equity, economic development and volunteerism.



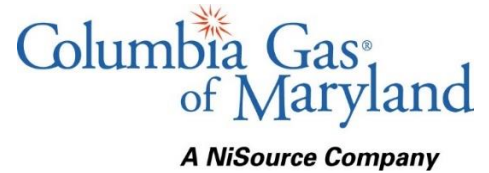
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MD 2026 HB 540 Columbia Gas Testimony Final.pdf

Uploaded by: Scott Waitlevertch

Position: INFO



**INFORMATIONAL – House Bill 540
Public Service Company Transparency Act
House Environment and Transportation Committee**

Columbia Gas of Maryland, Inc. (Columbia) has reviewed HB 540, the Public Service Company Transparency Act. The legislation prohibits certain electric, gas, and combination gas and electric companies from initiating a proceeding that may lead to a rate change unless the company provides customers with prior notice through a bill insert or email notice; requires those companies to include a certain statement in each customer bill and automatic payment e-mail notice; requires the companies to distribute a new annual rate report through a bill insert; and requires the Public Service Commission, in consultation with the Office of People's Counsel, to develop the new rate report.

Columbia believes in full transparency of rate information for customers, and we understand the importance of the issue of customer rate awareness and knowledge. The current process when a utility files for base rate changes has the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) directing a utility to file public notice and information in newspapers, file notice and information on utility public websites, and provide public notice through utility social media channels.

House Bill 540 attempts to enhance customer knowledge of rate information but unfortunately does so through a series of unworkable mandates that create new costs at a time when the General Assembly is searching for steps to reduce utility costs and bills.

An immediate concern on House Bill 540 is the required bill insert and email notice requirement that will add new costs to utility customers. Columbia interprets the legislation to require the customer bill insert and email notice each time there is a rate change such as a base rate case, a make whole case or a modification of a utility's tariff. In 2025 for example, due to changes in natural gas commodity costs - which can be decreases or increases – HB 540 would have required Columbia to provide nine new bill inserts and email notifications to customers. Additional inserts would be required under the legislation for typical tariff revisions and other rate changes easily bringing the number of new bill insert notices to 12 or more a year turning this process into a monthly notice.

Such monthly bill insert notices on rates diminishes Columbia's ability to effectively communicate with our customers on other important information they need to know such as gas and pipeline safety, customer assistance programs available to them to help pay bills, and energy efficiency.

The average cost for Columbia to produce and distribute a simple back and front bill insert is 37 cents per insert. Therefore, if this legislation was in effect in 2025, Columbia would have incurred an additional \$80,000 in new expenses to mail 12 bill inserts. With only 34,000 customers in our service territory this is an additional cost of \$2.35 per customer. Columbia further notes that the expenses related to complying with HB 540 would be eligible for recovery from customers in rates.

Another new cost on utility customers is the creation and distribution of a 10-year "trend report", with a visual graphic, that the utility is required to create and send to customers when a rate case is filed as well as annually, regardless of whether a rate case is initiated. This new requirement is overly burdensome and adds little value to customers.

An additional concern with House Bill 540 is the requirement to, prior to initiating a proceeding that may lead to a rate change, provide to customers a bill insert and email notice with the relevant case procedural dates and where to find information regarding the matter on the PSC's website.

Current PSC rate case procedures render this impossible because procedural schedules are determined weeks after the filing of a rate case. Further, once the PSC assigns a docket number to a case, the matter and all filings related thereto can be found on the PSC's website. The PSC assigns a docket number *after* a case is filed. Therefore, utilities are unable to provide information regarding procedural dates and PSC website links to the rate case prior to initiating a case with a rate change.

Columbia believes increased transparency and education of utility rates for customers is an admirable public policy goal. However, with Maryland's current focus on affordability issues across the economy, public policy that adds new costs to utility bills to provide such transparency and education must be carefully considered.

February 10, 2026

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