

## An Open Letter Regarding HB1190/SB0026

Dear Members of the Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am writing this as the originator of the Allegany County phone campaign which occurred on Tuesday, March 3rd and which urged an unfavorable report on HB1190. My goal in this letter is to clarify the motivations of myself and the 2,000 confirmed residents of Allegany County who have signed a petition against this bill in the single week since the petition was posted on Friday, February 27th.

During the Environment and Transportation Committee bill hearing on March 3rd, the Madam Vice-Chair stated that she had received "more calls about [HB1190] in the past three hours than on anything else we've done this year." In response, Delegate Hinebaugh stated that he believed those who had participated in the phone campaign were "upset with the Allegany County Board of Commissioners" and that "their objection is not with the bill itself; it's with the process with which it was filed."

With all due respect to Delegate Hinebaugh, he is incorrect. The thousands of Allegany County residents who shared the words I wrote about what HB1190 would and would not allow, who signed our petition against HB1190, and who participated in our phone campaign against HB1190 are in fact upset with the contents of the bill *and* with our Allegany County Commissioners.

We are upset with the contents of HB1190 because it contains a simplistic definition of an "Off-Grid Energy Provider", provides no limits, such as a maximum Megawatt capacity, and then eliminates all but the most basic of Maryland regulations on those providers.

We are upset with the contents of HB1190 because, as reported by WCBC Radio on February 25th, Senator Mike McKay has explicitly stated that SB0026 (the cross-posted ID for HB1190 in the Maryland State Senate) would allow him to seek the construction of a 300+ Megawatt Data Center (increasingly referred to as "hyperscale" sized) and associated power generation facility at the site of Luke Mill in Allegany County.

We are upset with the contents of HB1190 because, should it lead to a Data Center at the Luke Mill site, it could create immense, negative impacts on the groundwater of Westernport, which is still recovering from the devastating flooding of last year, on the North Branch of the Potomac, which is already dealing with millions of gallons of raw sewage, and it would allow for similar negative impacts on residents and natural resources across the state of Maryland.

It is true that we are also upset with Senator Mike McKay and our Allegany County Commissioners for not explicitly informing the public of the long term goals for Luke Mill and about whether or not any of them might personally profit from such a project. However, that pales in comparison to our frustration at the potential of facing the reality of that goal: A minimally regulated, 200+ Megawatt power generation facility and a 300 Megawatt Data Center in one of the most impacted parts of our county with the barely a sliver of public discourse.

I cannot claim to speak on the behalf of every resident of Allegany, but I can humbly suggest that those whom we have elected to represent us reflect on whether their decisions truly serve the best interests and long-term needs of the people of Allegany County.

I, and 2,000 of my fellow Allegany County citizens from across the political spectrum, respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB1190.

Eric Carey  
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