



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Local Union 1900
1400 Mercantile Lane, Suite 256
Largo, Maryland 20774



Jerry R. Williford Jr.
President, Business Manager, Financial Secretary

Richard B. Dawson
Business Representative, Vice President, Chairman of Executive Board

John Adams
Recording Secretary

Jason Payne
Treasurer

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Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jerry R. Williford Jr., President, Business Manager, and Financial Secretary of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1900. IBEW Local 1900 represents approximately 1,200 skilled utility workers across Maryland, including employees who operate, maintain, and support the electric and gas systems that keep our communities powered every day. For our members, long-term energy supply planning and infrastructure investment are essential. Predictable investment creates stable project pipelines, supports apprenticeship and workforce development programs, and sustains family-supporting union careers. Reliable energy investment strengthens Maryland's electric grid and provides economic stability for working families across the state.

We support HB 1561, the Affordable Energy Act, because reliability and affordability are inseparable, and right now Maryland is headed toward a supply shortfall that threatens both.

For IBEW Local 1900 members and their families, rising energy bills are not an abstract issue. Higher and more volatile power costs affect household budgets and create uncertainty for the very workers responsible for keeping the system running. They also make it harder for employers and public institutions to plan, invest, and operate reliably.

HB 1561 is a responsible step forward to meaningfully address increased supply prices and insufficient generation because it creates opportunity for necessary investment in energy generation in an accountable and transparent way.

HB 1561 empowers the PSC to require a resource adequacy plan when needed and enables investor-owned utilities, under Commission oversight, to develop or own generation and front-of-the-meter storage under defined circumstances.

This is why IBEW Local 1900 supports HB 1561: it restores clear accountability for getting resources built.

From a workforce standpoint, HB 1561 also supports the kind of predictable, long-term investment that allows utilities and contractors to plan for training, staffing, and safety. When projects are sporadic or uncertain, it's harder to sustain apprenticeship pipelines and maintain the skilled workforce that Maryland depends on for grid reliability. When investment is planned and accountable, it strengthens careers that let working families stay in Maryland and thrive.

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Through passage of this legislation, Maryland's commitment to building infrastructure and developing talent provides IBEW Local 1900 with reassurance that future demand will be met safely and dependably. I'd like to add that Local 1900 hopes that all future generation facilities in Maryland choose to employ a permanent union workforce, and I am eager to engage with any utility company to showcase what union labor can offer.

Before I conclude, though Local 1900 supports HB 1561, there are opportunities to provide labor standards and protections for the Maryland construction workers who will build these facilities.

The benefits of strong labor standards like prevailing wages and apprenticeship utilization requirements cannot be understated. Prevailing wage requirements guarantee that workers are paid family-sustaining wages and benefits. Likewise, apprenticeship utilization requirements ensure that large-scale construction projects like the generation facilities to be built under HB 1561 are used to educate and train the next generation of Maryland construction workers.

IBEW Local 1900 and its members stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our union sisters and brothers in the construction industry in urging that any generation facilities built under HB 1561 should be subject to strong labor standards and protections.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB 1561. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Jerry R. Williford Jr.
President, Business Manager, Financial Secretary
IBEW Local 1900