

Mid Atlantic Pipe Trades Association



Maryland Senate – Senate Finance Committee

TO: Delores Kelley, Chair; Brian Feldman, Vice Chair; and Member of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Jason Ascher, Political Director – Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

Oppose SB 887 – Electric Generation – Transition from Fossil Fuels – Carbon Dioxide Emissions Rate and Transition Account

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and its over seven thousand members from United Association Locals across the state, I ask that you OPPOSE SB 887.

While we understand the need to start moving off fossil fuels, we believe that this must happen on a realistic timeline and that many things need to get taken into consideration. A transition is required to ensure that workers and the public are not adversely affected.

First, this legislation will affect the jobs of hardworking Maryland residents. Many of them have worked at these facilities their entire careers and are close to retirement. They are earning good family-sustaining wages, with top health insurance coverage, and a defined benefit pension. It will not only put them out of work, but it does not consider funding to maintain their defined-benefit pensions. You are also not considering that the jobs they can “retrain” for may pay significantly less than what they earned previously.

Second, you need to consider where and how the lost KWh will get made up. In our high technology society, the use of electricity is not likely to decrease. To the best of my knowledge, there has been no decision on Offshore Wind from the Public Service Commission, and large scale solar would require an area of land that has not, to my knowledge, gotten discussed yet. New nuclear or natural gas is not considered to the best of my knowledge but would be the best option in this transition. Keep in mind, that according to an article in Reuters from January 2020, Denmark gets almost half its energy from Wind, which it has been investing in since the 1970's, while the majority of the other 50% still comes from fossil fuels.

Finally, because of all the things considered above, the timeline presented is not realistic. We need to phase in the renewable sources before we start closing the fossil fuel plants. Also, there needs to be consideration into everything that goes into generating all sources, fossil fuel, and renewable. This including how windmills and solar panels are made and disposed of, as well as where they get made before installation (Chinese made solar panels vs. the US-made solar panels.)

For the reasons listed above, I ask that you OPPOSE SB 887 with a favorable report.

Sincerely,
Jason Ascher
Political Director
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