



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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HB 298 – Utility Regulation – Consideration of Climate and Labor House Economic Matters Committee January 21, 2021

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
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Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 298 – Utility Regulation – Consideration of Climate and Labor. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has tremendous power and authority to determine the future of energy generation in Maryland. As such, and with all organization with that level of power, accountability, transparency, and the consideration of the livelihoods of Marylanders needs to be in the forefront.

HB 298 requires that energy generating companies submit information about their contracted workers on an annual basis, and, in turn, the PSC will then submit that information to the General Assembly. And the information collected will be granular in details: Trade classification, Apprentices working on projects, hourly wages for each contracted-out construction worker, health care benefits for each worker, Fringe benefits paid per worker, and total number of full-time and part-time workers on a project. This information is critical for policy makers in determining future energy needs and balancing that with the needs of workers and their families.

HB 298 also instructs the PSC to add to their considerations, when supervising and regulating public service companies the maintenance of fair and stable labor standards for affected workers. This consideration can only be done with the complete, accurate, and timely information provided by the energy companies. With an accurate picture of which energy companies and, more importantly, energy sectors are honoring the labor of the workers, the PSC can more easily use that information in considering future projects by these companies.

For our energy construction workers and their families, **we urge a favorable report on HB 298.**