



MARYLAND STATE TREASURER  
Nancy K. Kopp

**Written Testimony of State Treasurer Nancy K. Kopp**

**HB 298 – Utility Regulation – Consideration of Climate and Labor**

**Before the  
Economic Matters Committee**

**January 21, 2021**

Thank you for the opportunity to express my appreciation and support for HB 298, which clarifies the responsibility and authority of the Public Service Commission (PSC). I write both as State Treasurer, and as a member of the Maryland Commission on Climate Change.

As you know, Maryland is dedicated to achieving the clear goals in our Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) and Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) provisions. In order to meet these commitments to reduce emissions and move to renewable power, the PSC must play a vital role and incorporate achievement of the state goals as it regulates public service companies. Indeed, as a co-author of the 1976 law enlarging and empowering the PSC, I believe that this consideration is an inherent obligation of the Commission.

Recognizing, however, that the PSC had indicated doubt regarding its charge and authority, and that our present knowledge and understanding of the impact of global climate change lends urgency to this critical issue, I urge enactment of HB 298 and its Senate counterpart. HB 298 provides clarity and an explicit linkage to the most recent and best scientific information incorporated in the latest reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

HB 298 also codifies the requirement to consider fair labor standards for all affected workers; a necessity for a just transition into this new energy era. Additionally, a recently added provision requiring annual public reports on contractor wages and benefits further promotes transparency and assures that these vital concerns remain a powerful part of any discussion.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 298.