



Maryland Energy Administration

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: Nuclear Energy Development Task Force
DATE: February 29, 2024

MEA Position: LETTER OF INFORMATION

HB820 would initiate a nuclear energy development task force with the end goal of determining barriers to nuclear deployment in the State, along with any potential incentive structures that could be utilized to encourage the growth of nuclear generation in the State.

While generally supportive of maintaining clean, existing and new nuclear power and considering safe and financially viable power in Maryland, MEA would have difficulty with the majority of this bill which would divert important staff and other resources. Extensive staffing and coordination, which would strain MEA resources, would be necessary to manage and staff the Task Force.

Maryland has enacted one of the most ambitious GHG reduction standards in the country – a 60% reduction in GHG emissions is required by the Climate Solutions Now Act (CSNA), and it cannot be achieved without a substantial contribution from the power sector. The State is in need of emissions free energy generation, especially as existing fossil fuel plants retire.

Nuclear energy is one of the few resource types capable of providing large-scale, emissions-free generation that is firm, dispatchable, and can provide 24/7 baseload power to the grid. Furthermore, nuclear facilities can potentially utilize the waste heat from operations or be outfitted for hydrogen production, increasing revenue potential, defraying project costs.

Should the bill move forward, MEA suggests the following amendments to the final version:

- Eliminate the Task Force language.
- Require MEA to manage additional feasibility studies for new nuclear providers that would like to investigate siting a facility in Maryland concentrating on brownfields and retired fossil fuel generator sites. This would provide new firms direct and relevant information that would be needed to make determinations on whether to move forward with any given project.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Landon Fahrig, Legislative Liaison, directly (landon.fahrig@maryland.gov, 410.931.1537).