HCCA Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

HB0718: Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Eligible Sources - Alterations
(Reclaim Renewable Energy Act of 2023)

March 9, 2023

We are encouraged by the bill's efforts to improve the quality of the state's renewable portfolio standards by eliminating sources that do not qualify due to the nature of the resources.

While this is an improvement in reducing carbon emissions, we are concerned that the State is far behind its goals of reaching 50% renewables by 2030 and perhaps 100% renewables by 2040. In fact it is significantly behind today.

According to an analysis by the Energy Information Administration, in 2021, Maryland produced about 12% of its total electricity from renewable electricity. **But most of this 12%** comes from **Hydro** and not Tier 1 - solar and wind, which accounted for 4.8% and 1.2%, respectively.

Meanwhile the statutory requirement for renewables is 35.4% (https://codes.findlaw.com/md/public-utilities/md-code-public-util-sect-7-703.html.) by 2023 and 50% by 2030.

To meet the statutory 2030 goal of 50% Tier 1, Maryland's renewable energy deployment would need to increase by **50-fold per year**.

PJM's recent report on Energy Transition discusses a high rate of retirement of thermal facilities and a slow rate of deployment of new generators. PJM points out that its interconnection queue is composed primarily of intermittent and limited-duration resources. "Given the operating characteristics of these resources, we need multiple megawatts of these resources to replace 1 MW of thermal generation."

Currently the two main sources of electricity in Maryland are Nuclear Power and Natural Gas. The progress of renewable deployment has been very slow.

If the State is to have any chance of meeting the goal of decarbonization, nuclear should be part of the conversation.

Nuclear is clearly a clean resource. Check out the State DNR’s PPRP report on nuclear power published in 2020 that shows various data.

Specifically the number of deaths prevents due to nuclear power and a comparison of life-cycle emissions of various resources. The top three clean resources are wind, hydro, and nuclear.

There are several other benefits on this report that support changing the state’s policy and signaling to the markets that nuclear energy is a desired source of electricity.

We urge you to consider nuclear power as part of the State's solution to meet carbon reduction targets, because it is already doing so by producing 85% of the State's clean energy.