



Maryland
Hospital Association

January 25, 2024

To: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Re: Letter of Support with Amendments – Senate Bill 1- Electricity and Gas – Retail Supply – Regulation and Consumer Protection

Dear Chair Feldman:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 62 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 1 with amendments. While MHA supports the sponsor's intent to protect consumers from predatory behaviors, we are concerned with the bill's unintended consequences.

SB 1 proposes to limit electricity supply agreements to terms not to exceed 12 months. This restriction, however, would prohibit hospitals and health care facilities from entering into long-term contracts with energy suppliers. Long-term contracts are essential for hospitals to ensure a steady source of electricity at a predictable rate. Hospitals' access to a reliable source of electricity may be interrupted without long-term guarantees, which may disrupt our ability to provide necessary care to Marylanders.

We urge the sponsor to consider excluding hospitals and health care facilities from the proposed restriction. Carving out hospitals and related facilities can still advance the goal of retail consumer protection without jeopardizing Marylanders' access to health care.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable with amendments* report on SB 1. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with the sponsor to move this issue forward.

For more information, please contact:

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