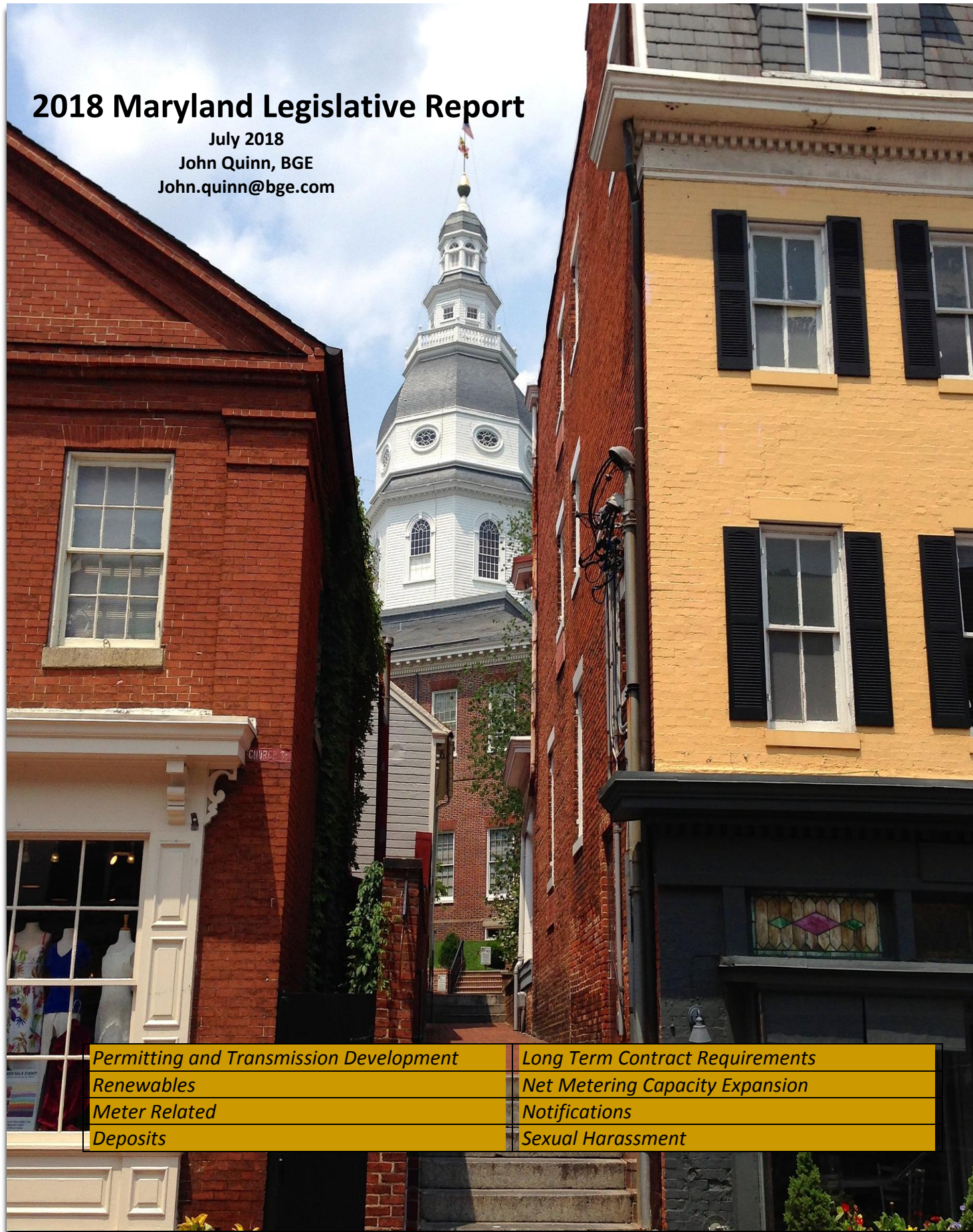


2018 Maryland Legislative Report

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The Maryland General Assembly convened its 437th Legislative Session on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, and adjourned Sine Die at Midnight, Monday, April 9, 2018 where it considered 3,125 bills and resolutions.

Permitting and Transmission Development

Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity (CPCN) / Electric Transmission Development

House Bill 715, 773, 794, 812, 784, 869, and 1126 / Senate Bill 691, 692, 695, 696, 761:

Outcome: Passed w amendment – House Bills [784](#), [869](#) and [1126](#), Senate Bill [696](#)

Failed – House Bill **715, 773, 784, 794, 812**; Senate Bill **691, 692, 695, 761**

These bills aimed to limit condemnation authority of private lands, to focus on the use of Brownfield sites for transmission development purposes, and other procedural changes to the CPCN process. Amendment language ameliorated the impact of these bills.

Summaries of the relevant amendments are:

- An amendment to House Bill 784 would have required that the applicant identify whether the proposed transmission utilizes a brownfield site, existing transmission right-of-way or existing towers or infrastructure. The bill as amended also would have required the PSC to post on its website and on its social media platforms when an application is filed. All other unfavorable provisions were removed from the bill.
- An amendment to House Bill 869 strikes unfavorable landowner compensation provisions but expands the notification provision to include owners of land adjacent to which the overhead transmission lines are proposed.
- An amendment to House Bill 1126 codifies the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requirement that PSC must consider the need to meet existing and future demand for electric service and alternative routes considered by the applicant, including cost of each alternative, and a statement as to why a route was rejected. All other provisions were removed from the bill.

Local Government – Overhead Transmission Lines – Property Maintenance House Bill 1490

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have authorized a county or municipality to enact a law that establishes standards and requirements for electric companies to adhere to in maintaining property where an overhead transmission line is located, with accompanying fines for noncompliance

Commercial Solar Facilities – Vicinity Tariff House Bill 1591

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have required an electric company to make available to retail customers a 30% discount on rates based on the location of a customer meter within one half mile of a

commercial solar facility. It would also have required the electric company to provide notice of the discount to customers each year

Public Service Commission – CPCN – Rapid Health Impact Assessment Requirement Senate Bill 1142/House Bill 1632

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have required a CPCN applicant for construction to conduct a rapid health impact assessment on the project and report on its finding within three weeks after the applicant submits its application to the PSC.

Long Term Contract Requirements

Long-Term Contracts Requirement for Standard Offer Service (“Ratepayer Reduction for Renewable Energy Act”) House Bill 967/Senate Bill 391

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have required an electric distribution company to enter into long-term contracts (10-20 years) for renewable energy credits and electricity generated from a Tier 1 renewable source beginning in 2021. Contracts would have to meet 25% of that year’s requirement under the State RPS for the electricity that each company provides to its customers through Standard Offer Service. Bill died with a vote of 7-3 in the Senate Finance Committee on the last day of the Legislative Session.

Renewables

Renewable Energy – Electric and Gas Bills (100% Clean Renewable Energy Equity Act of 2018)

House Bill 878

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have increased the RPS from current 25% by 2020 to 100% by 2035. It would also have limited annual combined electric and gas bill for a low-income customer to no more than 6% of the customer’s annual gross household income. Finally, it would have removed the pilot sunset of the Community Solar Energy Generating Systems program and created an “offshore wind energy credit.”

Renewable Energy and Job Development (Clean Energy Jobs Act of 2018) Senate Bill

732/House Bill 1453

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have increased the RPS from current 25% by 2020 to 50% by 2030, reduce alternative compliance payments, and removed specified sources from eligibility.

Net Metering Capacity Expansion

Net Metering and Community Solar Energy Senate Bill 557/House Bill 934

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have made changes to the capacity limit of electricity generation systems to be eligible to participate in net metering. The limit for such systems located on any lands that are not brownfield sites would increase from 2MW to 10MW, and the limit would be eliminated for systems placed on brownfield sites. The bill may accelerate the pace at which Maryland progresses toward the statewide net metering cap of 1500MW, and thus may increase the rate at which the cost shifts associated with net-metering and community solar impacts customer bills.

Meter Related

Gas and Electricity – Smart Meters House Bills 1274/1333/1463

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have prohibited a utility company from charging any fee to a customer who refuses installation of a smart meter or requests removal of a smart meter, and would have required the PSC to authorize a customer to purchase and install an analog meter.

Criminal Procedure – Search Warrants – Utility Meters House Bill 56

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have prohibited a law enforcement officer from accessing utility data information recorded by a smart meter without a search warrant. This may have impeded utilities' ability to initiate engagement with law enforcement related to utility investigations of potentially unlawful actions.

Public Service Commission – PG County – Master Meters and Task Force House Bill 218

Outcome: Passed

This legislation will prohibit the authorization of a master meter for utility services in residential multiple-occupancy buildings under condominium or cooperative ownership in PG County. It stipulates that the conversion of ownership to a condominium may not take effect until individual meters have been installed both for each individual dwelling unit and common areas of the building. The bill allows properly assigned usage to occupants.

Notifications

Consumer Relations – Natural Gas Infrastructure – Notice of Work House Bill 1387

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have required a natural gas company to provide notice of work on natural gas infrastructure by advertising in a newspaper of general circulation, on social media, and on the gas company's website and to maintain records of the notification.

Public Service Companies - Facility Equipment Removal House Bill 1568

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have required public service companies to remove facility equipment within sixty days after the facility equipment had been discontinued or replaced.

Deposits

Gas and Electric Companies – Deposit Charges House Bill 1667

Outcome: Failed

This legislation would have prohibited a gas or electric company from imposing a deposit requirement exceeding one month's estimated service charge on customers who are at least seventy years old, have lived at the service address for ten years, and have annual income below 300% of the federal poverty level. Regulations currently except customers 60 years and older from paying a deposit.

Sexual Harassment

Labor and Employment – Sexual Harassment – Contractual Waivers and Reporting Requirements Senate Bill [1010](#) /House Bill [1596](#)

Outcome: Passed

These bills require any employer with 50 or more employees to submit a short survey to the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights outlining the number of settlements made related to allegations of sexual harassment, the number of times an employer paid to resolved sexual harassment allegations against the same employee over the past 10 years of employment and the number of settlements made that included a provision requiring settlement confidentiality. The Commission will publish the aggregate number of responses from employers on its website. This reporting provision shall sunset on June 30, 2023.