

MARY BETH CAROZZA
Legislative District 38
Somerset, Wicomico,
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Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

September 8, 2020

Mary Phipps-Dickerson
Maryland Department of the Environment
407 Race Street
Cambridge, MD 21613

Re: September 17th Chesapeake Utilities Pipeline Project – Virtual Public Informational Hearing

Dear Ms. Phipps-Dickerson:

I am writing in strong support of the application filed by Chesapeake Utilities Corporation (“Chesapeake”) for a tidal wetlands license allowing Chesapeake to install a new natural gas line extension that will introduce natural gas service to Somerset County. The delivery of natural gas to this Shore region supports environmentally-sensitive economic growth.

I understand that this gas project is the result of a competitively-awarded contract by the Maryland Environmental Service that will allow gas infrastructure to be built to serve the Eastern Correctional Institution (ECI) in Westover and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) in Princess Anne by September 2021. Introducing natural gas to Somerset County will improve environmental emissions as natural gas burns much cleaner than the fuels currently available in the county. ECI currently uses a four megawatt cogeneration steam boiler fueled by wood chips to satisfy 85 percent of their electricity needs and 100 percent of their heating needs. UMES currently uses propane and fuel oil as its energy sources. The conversion to natural gas will reduce the CO₂ emissions of ECI and UMES by 64 percent and 23 percent, respectively.

For the past 30 years, diesel trucks have delivered the wood chips used for boiler fuel to ECI, including approximately 12 loaded trailers of wood chips per day. Conversion to natural gas would remove these diesel trucks from the road, reducing greenhouse gases emitted during the daily deliveries.

Notably, I understand that extending gas infrastructure to ECI will support the development of an anaerobic digestion facility that will produce renewable natural gas (RNG) while simultaneously addressing the issue of nutrient runoff from poultry waste. This locally-sourced RNG is the equivalent of natural gas and can be delivered to end-use customers via the same infrastructure.

In addition to the significant environmental benefits related to the gas project, natural gas is a less-expensive fuel source than those currently serving ECI and UMES. I consistently have supported local efforts to bring natural gas to this region of the Shore. The availability of natural gas in Somerset County has been a top economic development priority of local residents and businesses for over 25 years. Also, the Tri-County Council, made up of the county-elected representatives from Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester, has highlighted the delivery of natural gas to our local area as a major economic development priority. On behalf of my District 38 constituents, I respectfully request approval of Chesapeake's tidal wetlands license application.

I truly am grateful for your kind review and consideration.

In Service,



MARY BETH CAROZZA
State Senator – District 38
Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester