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**BILL NO.:** House Bill 0323  
Environment - Commission on Climate  
Change Membership - Addition

**COMMITTEE:** Environment & Transportation and  
Economic Matters Committees

**HEARING DATE:** February 14, 2024

**SPONSOR:** Delegate Guyton

**POSITION:** Favorable

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The Office of People's Counsel ("OPC") supports House Bill 323, which would add the Chair of the Public Service Commission ("PSC") or the Chair's designee to the Maryland Commission on Climate Change ("Climate Commission"), of which OPC is also a member.

The PSC has an important role to play in developing and implementing policies that will achieve the State's ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals set in the Climate Solutions Now Act, particularly in the electricity and buildings sectors. As such, the Climate Commission has made—and inevitably will continue to make—policy recommendations that either directly or indirectly implicate the work of the PSC. The 2023 Annual Report made the following recommendations, among others, that directly implicate the work of the PSC:

- support and enforce the 2025 electric school bus mandate;<sup>1</sup>
- provide funding for EV readiness projects;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Commission on Climate Change, *2023 Annual Report*, Mitigation Working Group ("MWG") Recommendation #7, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> MWG Recommendation #13, p. 14.

- modify the Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement Plan (STRIDE) to reduce ratepayer costs and facilitate electrification;<sup>3</sup> and
- sunset financial incentives for fossil fuel appliances/systems in the EmPOWER program.<sup>4</sup>

In developing such recommendations, the Climate Commission would benefit from the PSC's experience and expertise in the area of public utilities law and regulation.

**Recommendation:** OPC requests a favorable Committee report HB 323.

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<sup>3</sup> MWG Recommendation #14, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> MWG Recommendation #17, p. 15.