

Good afternoon. My name is Jonathan Lacock-Nisly, and I am the Director of Faithful Advocacy for Interfaith Power & Light DMV. I'm speaking today in support of Bill 13-22 because our faith communities have long been taking action to green our houses of worship as a way to care for our climate and our neighbors.

In the past year, many congregations have been learning more about the danger that burning gas in our buildings poses to our health and our climate. The **Sikh Spiritual Center in Rockville** is one of many congregations across our region that have participated in a gas leak tagging event. Using a handheld methane leak detector, they **were able to find a number of leaks in the gas network right in their own community.**

I know that sometimes these conversations about our power sources and our heating systems can seem very dry and technical, but for these congregations that have found gas leaks in their communities, the consequences of our dirty energy system are all too relatable.

Sadly, what the Sikh Spiritual Center found here in Rockville is not surprising. My organization and our partners recently released a report highlighting hundreds of leaks we found in Washington, DC's gas network. That report echoes what similar efforts across the country have found: **the gas networks beneath our streets, bringing gas to our furnaces, water heaters, and stoves leak constantly.**

And the dangers don't end at our front door. Studies have shown children growing up in a home with a gas stove are significantly more likely to have asthma. That's why I ask you to amend this bill to keep affordable housing on the same timeline as the rest of our buildings. The communities that depend on affordable housing deserve equal protection under the law. We must make sure that new affordable housing is built with electric appliances that protect the lungs of our youngest neighbors.

Across Maryland, faith communities are starting the work of turning away from burning, getting off of our leaky gas network and choosing clean electric appliances instead. **We call on you to join us.**