



Montgomery County Council

To: Council President Alborno and members of the County Council

From: Jason Ascher, Political Director, Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association – United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters

OPPOSE Council Bill 13-22

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Associations, our Locals, and our members living and working in Montgomery County, I ask you to **OPPOSE Council Bill 13-22**.

As an organization whose members build and service fossil fuel infrastructure, this legislation will irrevocably harm the careers of many of our members. These workers have been earning good family-sustaining wages with benefits for, in some cases, decades. They have been working hard, paying their taxes, and taking care of their families without the need for public assistance programs. Their work has ensured that taxpayers across Montgomery County can turn lights on in their homes and have hot water and heat in the cold winters. These members come from diverse backgrounds, such as immigrants from around the world, returning citizens, and some whose membership is a family tradition. Many of these workers will tell you these careers changed their life. Now, this legislation threatens their careers and the livelihood of their families. It does this without a care for what happens to them. These members trained for five years to be the industry's most skilled Plumbers and Gasfitters. Their training was at no cost to them or the taxpayers, and they earned wages and benefits that reflect that training. Unrelated to this specific legislation, any discussion in the past of "just transition" has not considered these wages and benefits.

As I write this, renewable energy sources are creating 8,052 MW of 133,853 MW on the PJM grid (PJM App at 2 P.M. on 7/25/22). Adding more demand to this grid while removing fossil fuels could be catastrophic. Currently, the infrastructure doesn't exist for renewable energy to replace fossil fuels without nuclear added as renewable. As of January of 2020, the country of Denmark, the world leader in wind power, only gets 47% of its energy from the wind after building infrastructure for 40+ years (Reuters 1/2/2020, *Denmark sources record 47% of power from wind in 2019*). On top of this, the cost of converting a home from gas to all-electric is \$24,000 to \$30,000, and there is no way landlords don't pass these costs on to their tenants. This cost would put an undue burden on families that can already barely afford to pay for the cost of housing. It would be better to increase the energy efficiency standards of new construction to help decrease the energy needed on the grid.

For all these reasons, I ask you to **OPPOSE Council Bill 13-22**