

NEWS RELEASE

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers®
AFL-CIO-CLC

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For immediate release:
April 27, 2006

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IBEW AND MARYLAND AFL-CIO URGE SPECIAL SESSION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY *Further legislative consideration of rate plan, PSC changes necessary*

In a letter to Maryland Senate President Thomas Miller, Jr. and House Speaker Michael E. Busch, President Edwin D. Hill of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers urged them to support the calling of a special session of the assembly, which adjourned on April 10 without making significant progress on relief for electricity ratepayers or passage of a bill to ensure a consumer-friendly Public Service Commission.

"A special Assembly session is needed in order to allow full consideration of S.B. 1102, a bill that would create a truly independent Public Service Commission to defend the interests of Maryland ratepayers," President Hill said in his April 26 letter.

Maryland AFL-CIO President Fred Mason also requested a special session, arguing that the assembly should have the opportunity to pass meaningful reform of the PSC, which is dominated by industry insiders. "S.B. 1102 is a bill that, if enacted into law, would take the first necessary steps to restore public confidence in utility regulator oversight in our state," Mason said. "With Governor Ehrlich's veto of this bill, however, the onus now falls on the General Assembly to act."

President Hill said only a reconstituted PSC could provide fair and open oversight of the rate relief plan and the proposed merger of Baltimore Gas and Electric parent company Constellation Energy Group and Florida Power and Light. The union charges that Governor Robert Ehrlich's rate relief negotiations and the PSC's oversight of the merger have been fraught with a lack of transparency and public disclosure that does not serve the interests of Maryland consumers.

The IBEW leader also asserted that Constellation has not been forthcoming with information key to a fair assessment of the proposed merger, including documentation on the compensation packages that will be given to company executives if the merger is completed. In its filings as an intervener in the merger process, the IBEW has also strenuously objected to the truncated hearing schedule proposed by the PSC that would further erode the chance for comprehensive public proceedings.

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The IBEW has approximately 750,000 members in the United States and Canada, including 220,000 in all sectors of the energy industry. For more information on the proposed CEG-FPL merger, see www.utilitymergerwatch.com.