Chamber Energy & Environment Position Pieces for HB 2076 and 2131

HB 2076 – Geothermal Energy Development Act

Key Provisions of the Bill

- Establishes a regulatory framework for geothermal energy development in Pennsylvania.
- Authorizes geothermal energy projects for electricity generation, heating, and cooling.
- Requires permitting and oversight by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
- Allows existing oil and gas wells to be repurposed for geothermal energy production.
- Creates standards for well construction, operation, decommissioning, and environmental protection.
- Establishes the Geothermal Energy Development Fund to support permitting, oversight, and enforcement activities.
- Provides notice and dispute resolution procedures for affected property owners.
- Authorizes DEP enforcement actions, including penalties for violations.

Chamber Position

The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce's Energy & Environment Committee supports HB 2076 as a strategic investment in Pennsylvania's energy future. By creating a clear regulatory framework for geothermal development, the bill encourages innovation, supports energy diversification, and creates opportunities for economic growth and job creation.

The Committee supports provisions that allow for the repurposing of existing oil and gas infrastructure, which can reduce development costs while extending the productive use of existing assets. The bill also includes important environmental safeguards and permitting requirements that help ensure geothermal projects are developed responsibly.

As energy demand continues to grow, particularly with the expansion of advanced manufacturing, technology, and data center operations, geothermal energy can serve as an important component of an all-of-the-above energy strategy that promotes reliability, sustainability, and economic competitiveness.

Chamber Energy & Environment Position Pieces for HB 2076 and 2131

HB 2131 – Electric Utility Default Service

Key Provisions of the Bill

- Requires electric generation suppliers to automatically return customers to their electric utility's default service when a fixed-term contract expires and the customer does not select a new supplier.
- Ensures customers continue receiving electric service without interruption.
- Requires customers returned to default service to be charged the utility's applicable default service rate.
- Directs the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to oversee implementation and utility compliance.

Chamber Position

The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce's Energy & Environment Committee supports HB 2131's efforts to provide a seamless transition for consumers whose competitive electricity supply contracts expire. The bill helps prevent service disruptions and reduces confusion for residential and commercial customers who may be unaware that their contract term has ended.

The Committee believes reliable and predictable energy service is essential for both households and businesses. At the same time, consumers should continue to have access to Pennsylvania's competitive electricity marketplace and the ability to make informed choices regarding their energy suppliers.

The Committee encourages policymakers, utilities, and suppliers to ensure customers receive clear and timely communication regarding contract expirations, default service rates, and available supplier options. Strong consumer education and transparency will help preserve market competition while protecting customers from unexpected outcomes.