



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

RE: HB398 Energy Efficiency - Net-Zero Homes - Contract Preferences

The MLLC supports HB398 Energy Efficiency - Net-Zero Homes - Contract Preferences

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation which improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a voice in the development of public policy affecting the Latino community and the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB398.

Creating eco-friendly and green communities is a priority for Maryland. This not only contributes to our environment, but generates job opportunities that can bolster our state's economy. Zero energy homes produce as much energy as they use over a year; these homes are the renewable and sustainable future our state needs. However, for a long time minorities have been shut out from the clean energy industry. In 2016, 28% of U.S. solar workers were women, 17.2% were Latino, 9.1% were Asian-American, and 6.6% were African-American. The State has flourishing small and minority businesses that can contribute to Maryland's environmental priorities. If they can service the construction and employment opportunities of net-zero homes, there is a mutual beneficial relationship for our state and our businesses that must be sought out.

HB398 requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to give preference to applications for funding for net-zero homes that will use small, minority, women-owned, and veteran-owned business services. We feel a similar urgency for both striving for clean renewable communities and building up our small and minority businesses. We support the well-being and accessibility of opportunities for Latinos and immigrants in the state.

The MLLC supports this bill and seeks your favorable report on HB398.