



The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain

House Bill 1134
Maryland Building Performance Standards – Fossil Fuel Use and Electric-Ready Standards

Position: SUPPORT
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Date: March 8, 2023
From: Gabrielle Leach

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1134.

HB 1134 would require amendments to the Public Safety Article § 12-503 governing the Maryland Building Performance Standards (Standards) for new building construction that are regulated by the Maryland Department of Labor. The Standards would require new buildings to meet their energy needs without the use of fossil fuels by October 1, 2025, for buildings with less than seven stories and by October 1, 2029, for buildings above seven stories tall. A waiver could be provided for electric-ready buildings for purposes of infeasibility, and buildings would still be required to seek emissions reductions and maximization of health, safety, and fire protection. Waivers could also be granted by local governments for emergency back-up power systems and buildings used for commercial food establishments, laboratories, laundromats, hospitals, and crematoriums.

This bill generally aligns with the State’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, as well as, recommendations by the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC), which is chaired and staffed by MDE. In its 2021 Annual Report, the MCCC recommended that “the General Assembly should require the Maryland Building Code Administration to adopt a code that ensures that new buildings meet all water and space heating demand without the use of fossil fuels (allowing for the use of electric heat pumps, solar thermal, and other existing and potential clean energy solutions) and are ready for solar, electric vehicle charging, and building-grid interaction. This code shall apply to all new residential, commercial, and state-funded buildings beginning as early as possible but no later than 2024.”

For the reasons detailed above, MDE urges a **FAVORABLE** report for HB 1134.