

HB1279_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
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TESTIMONY ON HB#/1279 – FAVORABLE

Maryland Building Performance Standards – Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric– and Solar–Ready Standards (Better Buildings Act of 2024)

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#1279, Maryland Building Performance Standards – Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric– and Solar–Ready Standards (Better Buildings Act of 2024)

Maryland has an ambitious program to reduce the use of fossil fuels to ameliorate the effects of climate change in our state. Fossil fuel extraction and refinement are exacerbating the problems we are facing. This bill is an attempt to mandate new Building Performance Standards that eliminate the use of fossil fuels in new construction. It further sets targets for energy conservation and use of electric and solar sources for powering new construction. It does not call for older buildings to be changed; it is a forward-looking bill for new construction within Maryland. We must commit that the continued use of those fossil fuel sources while we transition away from them, we assist in the mitigation of health harms from these fuels.

This bill facilitates addressing health impacts of climate change and can provide environmental justice to vulnerable populations already facing extreme effects from climate change caused by fossil fuels sited within or near those communities.

Fixing the problem and moving towards Maryland clean energy goals requires a plan to do so and the legal framework to make it happen. This bill moves the state in the direction of fixing problems by eliminating major contributors to those problems. It is a commonsense solution to move Maryland forward.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#1279.