



March 4, 2024

Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB 1279 – The Better Buildings Act
Organization: Mobilize Frederick
Submitting: Karen Cannon, Executive Director
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 6, 2024

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 1279 – The Better Buildings Act. Mobilize Frederick urges the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on this important climate bill.

Frederick County and the City of Frederick have adopted the 40 recommendations provided in the Climate Response and Resilience Report prepared by the City and County chartered Climate Emergency Mobilization workgroup to reduce carbon pollution and improve climate resilience. Both the City and the County are actively engaged in reducing the carbon footprint of our community to reach Maryland’s objective to achieve a 60 percent reduction in greenhouse gasses by 2031 and a 100 percent reduction by 2045. Passage of the Better Buildings Act will provide necessary tools to help reach those goals.

Mobilize Frederick is a non-profit organization of Frederick City and County residents formed to assist with implementation of the Climate Response and Resilience Report recommendations. We fully support Section B of the bill, requiring the Department of Labor’s Building Codes Administration to modify the Maryland Building Performance Standards to require, as of October 1, 2026, that all new buildings:

- Meet their water and space heating demands without use of fossil fuels;
- Over 20 stories and those with 20,000 square feet or more of continuous roof space be solar-ready;
- Be EV-Capable, EV-Ready, or have EV charging spaces if parking is provided; and
- Follow more stringent regional regulations as necessary.

In addition, we support the bill’s suggested waivers and the requirement that buildings granted waivers must seek to minimize emissions; maximize health, safety, and fire protection; and be electric-ready.

We fully support Section C, requiring the Department of Labor’s Building Codes Administration to modify the Maryland Building Performance Standards to require new buildings over 25,000 square feet to meet, on average, “Site Energy Use Intensity” (EUI) targets.

The Better Buildings Act will result in the reduction of carbon emissions, improve air quality, and substantially lower utility costs for homeowners, renters, and tenants. For all these reasons, we urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on HB 1279.

Karen Cannon
Executive Director

cc: Kathy Kinsey
Chair, Government Affairs and Policy Committee