



HB 210

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

Testimony before Economic Matters

February 14, 2024

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, Sponsor Acevedo, and members of the committee, my name is Barbara Matheson. I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). I am providing written testimony today in **support of HB 0210.** The purpose of the bill is to require new government buildings to be fossil free and electric ready.

The Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 positioned the state of Maryland as a leader in clean energy. However, the original requirements for building performance standards were removed from CSNA pending study of the electric grid capacity to support high electrification. The just-completed *Assessment of Electrification Impacts on the Maryland Electric Grid* resolves the concern. The findings indicate that a “highly electrified building sector” is well within the capacity of the state’s electric distribution system.

The electrification of new buildings is urgent and necessary to meet the state’s climate goals and to lessen the climate crisis. Severe weather patterns – droughts, heat, floods are too obvious to ignore. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a strong electric building code will reduce energy costs, remove health hazards, create good jobs and stabilize the economy. Furthermore, money is available. The 2021 federal *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* will provide \$225 million to help states revamp energy codes.

It makes no sense to continue to burn fossil fuels and disregard future impacts upon the state, the country, and the globe. The re-alignment of the Maryland Buildings code is essential.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Barbara Matheson, Columbia, Maryland