



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

HB 1279 - Maryland Building Performance Standards – Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric– and Solar–Ready Standards (Better Buildings Act of 2024)

POSITION: Support

By: Linda T. Kohn, President

Date: March 6, 2024

Since the emergence of the environmental movement in the 1970's, the League of Women Voters has advocated for policies that protect our planet and promote public health. The League believes in advancing comprehensive legislation to mitigate the climate crisis, and accelerate the transition to predominant reliance on renewable energy.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **supports HB 1279, the Better Buildings Act**, which would protect our health from indoor air pollution, reduce our dependence on expensive methane gas, and move us closer to a fossil-free energy system. **HB 1279** would enact key Building Performance Standards requiring new buildings to meet energy demands without using fossil fuels.

The Better Buildings Act would ensure that Maryland is a part of the new green future. Residential and commercial buildings that powered *without* fossil fuels are cheaper to build, cheaper to operate, and minimize both indoor and outdoor air pollution. In 2020, buildings in Maryland contributed nearly a third of greenhouse gas emissions statewide.¹ This makes building electrification a top priority for Maryland to reach its goals of reducing emissions 60% by 2031 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2045.

So much is at stake as we approach the deadlines for Maryland's climate targets. There is no more time to delay meaningful climate action.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **strongly urges a favorable report on HB 1279.**

¹ Building Energy Performance Standards: What You Need to Know, Maryland Department of the Environment, 31 Oct. 2023.