



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

**Position: Unfavorable**

The Maryland REALTORS® oppose HB 1279 which requires new buildings to meet all water and space heating demands without the use of fossil fuels by October 1, 2025.

The REALTORS® have concern over the following provisions:

- The change to non-fossil fuel equipment kicks in upon a significant improvement (50% of the replacement cost or the original structure) which appears to require the building to meet “all” water and space heating demands and not just the addition or new construction. This can add significant costs particularly if existing equipment must be replaced. The improvement has some exceptions but would apply to any addition and repair unless the repair corrects existing health or a safety code violation.
- The bill also requires all new one and two-family homes to have one EV-ready or capable space regardless of whether the new buyer has requested it.
- The solar ready requirement for roofs adds additional costs to multi-unit buildings that already face many requirements making it difficult to construct affordable units.
- The bill requires new buildings to meet all water and space heating demands “without the use of fossil fuels” which raises the question of whether electric equipment powered by fossil fuel utilities would be acceptable.

The Maryland REALTORS® recognizes that the housing industry along with other industries will be moving to electric standards but is concerned about the time frames and requirements in this bill that will impact housing affordability. For these reasons, the Maryland REALTORS® recommend an unfavorable report.

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