



**MARYLAND STATE & DC
AFL-CIO**

Donna S. Edwards
President

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**HB 145 - Green and Renewable Energy for Nonprofit Organizations Loan Program and Fund
House Economic Matters Committee and Appropriations Committee
January 23, 2025**

SUPPORT with AMENDMENTS

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 145 if amended to include labor standards attached to the creation of certain energy systems. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

HB 145 seeks to provide financial assistance to nonprofit organizations for the planning, purchase, and installation of qualifying energy systems. Through the creation of the Green and Renewable Energy Loan Program and establishment of the fund, this bill supports nonprofits in their efforts to "go green" and allows them to contribute to our state's ambitious energy goals without taking away funding from the mission and purpose of their organization.

The bill requires the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to oversee a number of aspects of the program such as overall supervision, ensuring that loans are being utilized appropriately and upholding the purpose of the program. As these energy systems are planned and developed, we can undoubtedly expect these projects to create jobs in sectors including construction, manufacturing and other trades. For these jobs, it is imperative that we apply labor standards. We must hold these energy jobs to a high standard, ensuring that we are setting the worker up for success and subsequently the project and our state's energy initiatives.

To address the inclusion of labor standards, we propose the following amendment:

On page 4, section 9-2104 -

"(4) ENSURE THAT WORKERS ARE NOT PAID LESS THAN THE PREVAILING WAGE RATE DETERMINED UNDER TITLE 17, SUBTITLE 2 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE."

This simply requires that employers pay fair wage rates in line with industry standards, preventing a race to the bottom on job standards and work quality. In adopting this amendment, we not only ensure the program benefits nonprofits and our energy goals, but also supports workers and fosters high-quality jobs in Maryland.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to submit a favorable report of HB 145 if amended. Thank you for your consideration.

