

SB0804 - SUPPORT
Laura Welch
Third Act Maryland
maryland@thirdact.org
301-928-1624

SB0804- Better Buildings Act

Energy Education and Environment Committee
February 27th, 2025

Chair Feldman, and Members of the Energy Education and Environment Committee,

On behalf of my organization Third Act Maryland, I urge a favorable report on SB0804. The Better Buildings Act is a bill that would help the environment, health, and pocketbooks of Marylanders. It will also help us reach our clean energy goal to reach net zero by 2045.

All-electric building codes decrease lifetime energy consumption and reduce the cost of construction by thousands of dollars. Operating costs also decrease with electrification – this is especially beneficial to lower-income residents who pay a higher share of their income on energy bills.

This legislation is also popular nationwide, with the state of California and New York City being two of the biggest adopters of new building electrification bills. Similar legislation has been enacted by more than 100 state and local governments, including Montgomery County. The Better Buildings Act will strengthen clean energy in Maryland while saving households money on energy bills and medical expenses caused by the current fossil-fuel furnace infrastructure.

I'm a physician and would like to draw your attention to the health effects of gas infrastructure and appliances in buildings. Gas stoves emit nitrous dioxide, which is an irritant to the lungs and is a known cause asthma. Many homes with gas burning stoves have levels of nitrous oxides which would exceed EPA's outdoor air quality standards! (There are currently no standards for indoor air.) And it is well known that gas pipes can leak methane, which is very flammable and has caused property destruction and deaths every year in Maryland. Electrification would eliminate these hazards, improving life across the state.

I urge you to reach a favorable report on SB0804.