



**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**Testimony on:** SB 804 – Maryland Building Performance Standards-Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric and Solar-Ready Standards (Better Buildings Act of 2025)  
**Organization:** Jewish Community Relations Council, Howard County, MD  
**Submitting:** Betsy Singer  
**Position:** FAVORABLE  
**Hearing Date:** February 27, 2025

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

Repair of the world (*tikkun olam*) is a guiding Jewish value. We are compelled to act to prevent massive changes to Earth's climate as we face rising temperatures due to burning fossil fuels that trap greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere.

Fossil fuel furnaces and water heaters generate 17% of Maryland's greenhouse gases. An efficient and affordable way to lower heat-trapping emissions is to change from burning fossil fuels to heat and cool buildings and homes and instead use clean energy sources. We can do that through features of The Better Buildings Act, which carries no additional budget costs for the Maryland state government.

The bill requires that the state Department of Labor, as part of the Maryland Building Performance Standards, adopt requirements that all new buildings and significant improvements meet all laundry, water and space heating energy demands of the building without the use of fossil fuels.

Local jurisdictions could grant limited waivers including for backup power systems as well as for restaurants, labs, hospitals, and crematoriums. Buildings granted waivers would be required to be built electric-ready and must include automatic ventilation to maintain healthful indoor air quality.

All-electric new buildings will save energy, avoid fossil fuel combustion and are less expensive to build and operate than gas-powered and dual-fueled buildings in Maryland. Electric heat pump technology has advanced rapidly and has significantly reduced fuel costs and carbon emissions. Owners and tenants in new all-electric homes and buildings will also avoid the substantial cost increases projected for the delivery of methane gas in future years.

For these reasons, we strongly support SB 804 and urge a FAVORABLE report in committee.