

SB804 - SUPPORT
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**SB 804 – Maryland Building Performance Standards – Fossil Fuel Use,
Energy Conservation, and Electric- and Solar-Ready Standards
(Better Buildings Act of 2025)**

Meeting of Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 27, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the

I urge a favorable report on SB 804, the Better Buildings Act. Buildings heated using natural gas are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to public health problems. According to a well-documented recent article in *The Guardian*¹:

Fossil fuel use in buildings accounts for nearly a third of all US planet-heating pollution, and top UN climate scientists say building electrification must be the “dominant strategy” for decarbonization. Gas usage in the home has also been linked to childhood asthma and other health issues.

This bill would, without significant cost to the state, address these dire concerns in a simple, direct manner. It would convert our building stock from climate liabilities that get their space- and water- heating from unhealthy, methane-emitting gas lines, to climate assets that use electricity that will be increasingly carbon-free as we achieve the goals of the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022.

Global warming is an immense problem getting worse with every passing year of inaction. The idea that we are continually missing opportunities to do more to maintain a livable planet for our children and grandchildren causes me profound distress.

¹ “US fossil fuel industry campaigns to kill policies that ban gas in new buildings,” February 24, 2025, www.theguardian.com.

By simply requiring that we require new buildings to meet their space and water heating needs without the use of fossil fuels, the Better Buildings Act will significantly reduce the amount of greenhouse gas pollution with its attendant health problems. By moving from fossil-fuel burning furnaces to more efficient electric heat pumps, it will *reduce* energy costs. Also, it will avoid wasteful expenditures on new gas furnaces and pipeline that will in coming years become stranded assets as Maryland moves toward net-zero carbon emissions.

Efforts by the fossil fuel industry to defeat bills like this place profits over the health and well-being of citizens and of the planet as a whole. Here, with the Better Buildings Act, we have a win-win opportunity to take meaningful action in Maryland to place people and the planet first. Please don't pass it by: let's take advantage of these benefits by passing the Better Buildings Act.