



## Senate Bill 804

### *Maryland Building Performance Standards - Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric- and Solar-Ready Standards*

Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Date: Feb. 25, 2025

From: Chip Bertino, Worcester County Commissioner

I am Worcester County Commissioner Chip Bertino and I am writing to oppose Senate Bill 804, which stands to have significant impacts on both commercial and residential construction costs.

Infrastructure improvements to make buildings ready for clean energy come at a steep cost—a cost that will simply be passed on to home buyers and renters. This will only make Maryland's housing crisis worse. If commercial construction costs go up, economic activity will decrease, as developers will be slower to take on new projects.

We also have to consider the added strain on the electrical grid that will come as fossil fuels are phased out. Ratepayers are already struggling with rising energy costs. Has the state studied the impact building electrification will have on existing infrastructure? The costs of any infrastructure improvements needed to handle the increased demand will fall on ratepayers.

As an elected official in a small rural jurisdiction, another issue I have to consider is whether a small county like ours is equipped to handle the enforcement and compliance challenges that could come with additional building standards. Ensuring structures meet any new requirements is something that will fall on local jurisdictions.

I urge you to provide Senate Bill 804 with an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.