



SB804 - SUPPORT

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SB804 - Better Buildings Act

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

- My name is Kevin Walton, I live in Montgomery County, and I am here representing The Climate Mobilization of Montgomery County. Our organization urges a favorable report for SB804, the Better Buildings Act.
- My experience with building energy performance and electrification includes:
 - serving since 2022 as the Chair of Montgomery County Building Energy Performance Board, which advises on the county's Building Energy Performance Standards law, and
 - serving as a Subgroup co-Chair for the 2023 Maryland Building Energy Performance Task Force.
- This week, Montgomery County passed by unanimous vote the regulations to implement the 2022 Building Energy Performance Standards law. This will result in increased building electrification across the County.
- An arduous and time-consuming process was required to reach the final set of regulations that was acceptable to building owners, residents of multifamily buildings and all the other groups and constituents affected by the law.

- A new construction building electrification law, similar to SB804, was passed by unanimous vote in Montgomery County in 2022. This law also required an extended vetting process prior to a final vote.
- Despite these achievements at the local level, there are several reasons why the state should now take the lead in new building electrification:
 - The issues surrounding the requirements for new construction of electrified buildings are no different in Montgomery County than they are in Howard, Prince Georges, Anne Arundel, Somerset, or Baltimore Counties, or in Baltimore City.
 - A state law will create the greatest clarity for builders and building owners, knowing that all jurisdictions have the same minimum requirements.
 - The law will position Maryland as a major leader in sustainable construction, creating business opportunities across the state and the region.
 - Having the state take the lead on new building electrification creates the most efficient process to build the most efficient buildings.
- In conclusion, The Climate Mobilization urges passage of SB804, The Better Buildings Act because it will promote clarity and consistency across the state as we rise to meet the challenges of energy use, climate change, and quality living and working spaces.

Thank you for your time.

Kevin Walton