



HB973

Maryland Building Performance Standards - Fossil Fuel Use, Energy Conservation, and Electric- and Solar-Ready Standards (Better Buildings Act of 2025)

Testimony before the Environment and Transportation Committee

Hearing February 26, 2025

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Korman and Vice-Chair Boyce, and members of the committee, my name is Peter Alexander, and I represent the 900+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **in support of HB973**. We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Bofo and his many colleagues for sponsoring this important legislation.

The Better Buildings Act reduces energy costs and improves public health for Marylanders by requiring **all newly constructed buildings** to meet their space and water heating needs without the use of fossil fuels. Similar legislation has been enacted by more than 100 state and local governments.

HB973 will:

- **Lower energy costs.** Building electrification has been shown to reduce the cost of new construction by thousands of dollars for single family homes, and cut lifetime energy consumption by 34%.
- **Improve public health.** Pollution from fossil fuel HVAC and water heaters is responsible for \$1.3 billion in annual health impacts, and was attributed to 3,500 cases of asthma symptoms and 163 premature deaths in 2017 alone.
- **Avoid stranded fossil fuel assets.** Every new furnace installed today puts residents at risk of 15 more years of health-harming air pollution and rising energy bills

This legislation has strong public support. Versions of this policy have already been enacted in Montgomery County and Howard County, and state law requires ALL buildings over 35,000 square feet to eliminate onsite emissions by 2040. Governor Moore's MDE has endorsed the policy, along with over four dozen organizations in Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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