



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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*Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education*

## House Bill 973

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

Date: February 26, 2025  
To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**  
From: Gussie Maguire,  
MD Staff Scientist

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 973, which updates the Maryland Building Performance Standards to require electrification of utilities, improved energy conservation, and suitability for renewable energy in new and significantly improved buildings over 20,000 square feet.

In addition to contributing to climate change through the release of greenhouse gases, natural gas and other fossil fuels emit nitrogen oxides, which account for a significant proportion of nitrogen pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Natural gas-fueled furnaces, water heaters, and dryers worsen both indoor and outdoor air quality; continuing to invest in natural gas infrastructure will increase both environmental and human health impacts. The bill's additional requirements for energy efficiency ensure that the net impact of electrification will not result in higher demand on fossil fuel-burning power generators.

Finally, by requiring qualifying buildings to be solar ready, the bill encourages solar siting on existing impervious surfaces. Placing solar installations on buildings reduces the potential for solar arrays to be built at the expense of agricultural or forested land and reduces transmission needs.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 973.**

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [mstegman@cbf.org](mailto:mstegman@cbf.org).

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.