

March 4, 2020

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support of House Bill 1490 (Environment- Building Energy Performance Standards and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Targets) with Amendment

Dear Chairman Barve:

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA), representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, supports House Bill 1490 (Condominiums - Amendment of Declarations) with amendment.

This measure requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL), and the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to establish new requirements for owners of covered buildings to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. MDE, MDL, and MEA will work together to establish new building energy performance standards, and establish incentives and financial assistance programs to help owners offset the increased costs of complying with the new building standards.

While we appreciate the intent to reduce GHG emissions, this measure will result in a significant increase in expenditures for business that own covered buildings. When the cost of building increases, the cost of the home price must increase as well; this measure will only perpetuate the housing crisis in Maryland, especially for middle and low income families.

Therefore, we support financial assistances offsets from MEA for businesses that provide GHG emissions monitoring, as well as companies that build and implement GHG emissions reduction services. We also believe that we need more of a framework before moving forward with this process. Other jurisdictions have struggled with this. We would like to see this studied further before moving forward.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee adopt this amendment and give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: House Environment and Transportation Committee Members