



TESTIMONY FOR HB0379
PUBLIC UTILITIES – LOW INCOME HOUSING – ENERGY PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Charkoudian

Committee: Economic Matters

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0379 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members support those who are struggling. Many Marylanders don't have the funds to weatherize their homes. This bill increases the financial assistance to weatherize low-income housing through the Empower Maryland Program. Being able to weatherize will greatly improve energy efficiency and make utilities more affordable for low-income residents.

It will also improve the health of low-income residents since Empower will fund mold remediation. Currently, Empower Maryland funds are disproportionately used by wealthier households. This bill will make these funds more accessible to low-income households, improving housing for those who most need it and lowering the energy demands on the state's utilities.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.