



Consumer Federation of America

Via email

March 30, 2021

To: Delegate Dereck E. Davis
House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for SB 418, a bill to Establish Minimum Energy and Water Efficiency Standards

Dear Delegate Dereck E. Davis and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is writing in regards to SB 418, legislation which would establish minimum energy as well as water efficiency standards for eleven products including common household products such as air purifiers, faucets, toilets and showerheads as well as standards for commercial products such as commercial dishwashers and steam cookers. We applaud you for holding a hearing on this bill.

By way of background, CFA is an association of more than 250 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education. We have long advocated for cost-effective energy and water efficiency standards at the state and federal levels as they benefit consumers through lower utility bills. Efficiency standards also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, a key contributor to climate change.

This bill is an excellent opportunity to reduce energy and water waste, lower consumer utility bills, cut greenhouse gas emissions and reduce air pollution. Additionally, when the commercial and industrial sectors are included, consumers will indirectly benefit thanks to reduced operating costs lowering the costs of goods and services.

If SB 418 is adopted, additional data provided by Appliance Standards Awareness Project (ASAP)¹ indicate the annual savings by 2035 for Maryland consumers and businesses to be:

- \$329 million on utility bills;
- 4,034 gigawatt hours of electricity;
- 134 billion gallons of water;

- And 1.5 million metric tons of carbon.

The efficiency standard for faucets and showerheads alone would save almost \$115 million annually in utility bills, all at zero cost to Maryland consumers.

With all but one product having a payback period of less than a year, low-income homeowners will directly benefit from installing more efficient household appliances, since they are responsible for their utility bills. Low-income tenants, as well, would benefit through the lower utility bills they will pay as landlords will be purchasing more efficient replacement appliances for their rental properties.

In closing, we believe the time is ripe to pass this legislation – it is a win-win-win for Maryland. SB 418 will cut unnecessary energy and water waste, save consumers and businesses money, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By adopting this legislation Maryland can again be a leader in energy efficiency as it was previously thanks to bills passed in 2004, and again in 2007. Failure to pass SB 418 could leave Marylanders to foot the bill, while states such as Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island continue to forge ahead. CFA urges you to adopt this beneficial, pro-consumer bill and to forge the way for your state to be a leader in energy and water efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Richard Eckman
Energy Research Associate
Consumer Federation of America

¹ Appliance Standards Awareness Project, “2021 Maryland Appliance Standards Savings Table,” https://appliance-standards.org/sites/default/files/Maryland_savings_estimates_proposed_products.pdf