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MAYOR

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HB 379

February 4, 2021

TO: Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations
RE: HOUSE BILL 379 – Public Utilities – Low–Income Housing – Energy Performance Targets

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Davis, Vice Chair Dumais, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 379.

Baltimore City’s Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers several programs (LIGHT Intake and Assessment, Weatherization Assistance, Lead Hazard Reduction) which assists Baltimore City residents by providing no- and low-cost services to improve housing conditions and energy efficiency. These services include energy efficiency and weatherization, home rehabilitation, lead hazard reduction and asthma trigger reduction. Providing case management and coordinating the delivery of these housing upgrades enables low- and middle-income households to maximize the safety, health and energy efficiency of their homes.

Baltimore City has an aging housing stock with infrastructure that could benefit from energy efficiency services. The most limited income residents of Baltimore City often occupy homes with significant structural deficiencies that prevent weatherization and energy efficiency services from being delivered, thereby preventing these households from accessing energy savings, improved air quality and thermal comfort, as well as other benefits.

By enacting HB 379, limited income residents in Baltimore City will benefit from greater access to resources through the Empower Maryland Low Income Efficiency Program. HB 379 encourages and promotes the coordination of home improvement programs for limited income Marylanders, in much the same way as our programs here in Baltimore. Increased coordination will lead to greater benefits for Marylanders and help to maximize the efficiency of these programs.

We respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 379.

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