



HoCoClimateAction.org
Howard County, Maryland

Testimony in Support - (HB1007/SB0810) Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard and Geothermal Heating and Cooling Systems

Hearing Date: February 25, 2021

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Lorig Charkoudian

Committee: Economics Matters Committee

Submitting: Howard County Climate Action

Position: Favorable

[HoCo Climate Action](#) -- a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing more than 1,450 subscribers, and a member of the Howard County Climate Collaboration -- (HB1007/SB0810), Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard and Geothermal Heating and Cooling Systems.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we have less than 10 years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 60% to avoid the worst impacts of a rapidly warming planet. That means we must transform our households and our entire economy to use clean sources of energy instead of fossil fuels.

We know that greenhouse gasses from heating and cooling homes are a major source of Maryland's climate emissions. Some few members of our group have installed geothermal in their homes. They did this because of their major commitment to reduce greenhouse emissions by avoiding the use of fossil fuels. As a bonus, they saved money and had very low utility bills because this technology is highly efficient at heating and cooling homes and producing hot water.

Because geothermal is a true clean and highly efficient technology, it should be included in the Maryland Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). The objective of Maryland's RPS is to recognize and develop the benefits associated with a diverse collection of renewable energy supplies. MD's RPS Program does this by recognizing the environmental and consumer benefits associated with renewable energy. Geothermal cooling and heating systems meet these environmental and consumer benefits. Including geothermal technology in the RPS will incentivize greater deployment of geothermal heat pumps in Maryland.

HB 1007 also includes provisions that require that a percentage of eligible geothermal systems benefit low or moderate-income individuals and communities while ensuring good job growth with family sustaining wages, and with career advancement training programs in Maryland.

While Maryland currently offers some rebates for commercial and residential installation of geothermal systems, this bill would also require the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to conduct a comprehensive technical study and establish the Geothermal Energy Workgroup. Studying the best and most cost-efficient methods of deploying and incentivizing geothermal will benefit our state in its

goals to meet the climate emergency facing all of us. This technology is highly efficient and we should have the best tools and information available in achieving our critical goals of reducing greenhouse emissions.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.

HoCo Climate Action

HoCoClimateAction@gmail.com

Submitted by Liz Feighner, Steering and Advocacy Committee, Columbia MD

www.HoCoClimateAction.org