



March 5, 2021

**SB 0810** Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard and Geothermal Heating and Cooling Systems

**Position** Favorable

**TESTIMONY**

On behalf of the NAACP Maryland State Conference of the NAACP, I strongly urge a favorable report on SB 0810, *Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard and Geothermal Heating and Cooling Systems*.

Limited income households, communities of color, and other disadvantaged communities stand to benefit the most from renewable energy deployment through energy bill reduction and improved public health outcomes, but often have the least access to the benefits of renewable energy programs.

SB 0810 would create incentives for more renewable deployment by including geothermal in our renewable portfolio standard. Yet, more importantly it would ensure low- and moderate-income households are the beneficiaries of this addition by calling for 25% of the systems to be installed in homes and community centers that house and serve low- and moderate-income ratepayers.

Low- and moderate-income Marylanders would be able to see the benefits and be able to recoup the savings on their energy bills within 2 to 10 years through savings on their utilities. Maryland's low-income residents pay 550% more as a portion of their income for energy than non-low-income Marylanders. The majority of these households are Black, Hispanic or Asian household. Covid- 19 has exacerbated this inquiry with over 209,000 residents in arrears in the Pepco and BGE territories.

By deploying geothermal energy in homes, we could improve indoor air quality that could result in improved health outcomes for low- and moderate-income households.

SB 0810 would also create a strong growing geothermal industry that provides family sustaining jobs and a sustainable planet. The bill calls for installers to provide healthcare, apprenticeship opportunities as well as family sustaining wages.

For all of the above reasons, the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP urges a favorable report on SB 0810. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,  
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