

HB806 - Building Standards and Emissions Reductions – High Performance, State, and Local Government Buildings, State Operations, and Eligible Projects

Date: March 1, 2022

Committee: House Appropriation Committee

Position: Favorable

Victoria Venable, Maryland Director - Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, I urge a favorable report from the committee on HB806 - Building Standards and Emissions Reductions – High Performance, State, and Local Government Buildings, State Operations, and Eligible Projects. While CCAN Action Fund strongly supports this bill, we concur with several amendments introduced with the Climate Partners testimony to strengthen it.

The CCAN Action Fund is the advocacy arm of Chesapeake Climate Action Network, a grassroots organization dedicated exclusively to fighting for bold and just solutions to climate change in the Chesapeake region of Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC. We have worked hard with members of this body to increase clean energy deployment, pass greenhouse gas reduction goals, and combat climate change at the state level. We must pass legislation this year to address the way our building sector contributes to climate change and put our built infrastructure on a greener pathway.

Because buildings emit 40% of Maryland’s greenhouse gases (13% of which are direct emissions) and account for 90% of Maryland’s electricity use, improving building energy performance and transitioning buildings off of fossil fuels is critical to reaching Maryland’s climate commitments. In November of 2021, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change released its [annual report and Building Energy Transition Plan](#), recommending the adoption of Building Emission Standards and an “all-electric new construction code.”

HB806 introduces versions of both of these recommendations to apply to government buildings (both state and local). While we believe that new construction should adhere to a true all-electric standard, we appreciate the introduction of an electric standard for water and space heating. Based on current trends, Maryland is on track to have [12% more residential gas customers in 10 years](#) than today. Much of this infrastructure will be obsolete in a matter of decades as we transition to clean energy. In order to reduce emissions from our building sector, we must not invest in new fossil fuel infrastructure. Electrifying our new buildings will help us shift this trend while ensuring that ratepayers are not paying the costs of ill-thought-out energy investments of investor-owned utilities.

Just as we have advocated for the state to lead the way in vehicle electrification, we believe that publicly funded buildings should lead the way in building emissions reduction and electrification. HB806 puts us on that path.

Thank you for your consideration of HB806 - Building Standards and Emissions Reductions – High Performance, State, and Local Government Buildings, State Operations, and Eligible Projects. For all the reasons stated above, we urge a favorable report and the inclusion of our amendments.