



February 15, 2022

Delegate Maggie McIntosh
Chairwoman, Appropriations Committee
Room 121
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for House Bill 0729
Facilitating University Transformations by Unifying Reductions in Emissions (FUTURE) Act

Dear Delegate McIntosh and members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing to voice AIA Maryland's support for House Bill 0729. AIA Maryland represents nearly 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and advocates for the profession and the quality of the built environment. As architects, we fully support sustainable strategies in building design and construction as we collectively work to realize environmental, economic and social sustainability for the citizens of Maryland.

We recognize that buildings alone are responsible for approximately 39% of the global greenhouse emissions and that we need to reduce our appetite for energy consumption. The latest climate data tells us that reducing carbon emissions is not enough. To make the biggest impact, we must all commit to net zero emissions by 2030 – a path that requires strong, immediate action. The AIA 2030 challenge is driving many of our members to strive for carbon neutral major renovations and new buildings by 2030. At AIA Maryland, we are fully in support of this move away from fossil fuels and, as we continue to design our buildings to be more efficient, a switch from fossil fuels to electrification and renewable resources.

Our public universities can play an important role in transitioning our own state away from fossil fuels. HB 0729 will ensure that our universities are part of the climate solution. This bill requires each public senior higher education institution to complete carbon neutrality by 2035, with an intermediate goal requiring neutrality for purchased electricity and direct emissions in 2025. These are reasonable and achievable targets for universities to hit, and in line with the reductions scientists say are necessary. With the additional requirement of a dedicated individual in position to ensure climate and sustainability goals are being prioritized and met, universities will be well-equipped to achieve these goals. As our citizens and communities shift to carbon neutrality, it makes good sense that our public institutions be leading the way in meeting these reduction targets to reach carbon neutrality by 2035.

A healthy climate is key to a healthy and safe future for us, our children, and our grandchildren. By implementing common sense climate solutions today, we can preserve a livable planet, clean air and clean water for generations to come. A healthier climate and safer future are possible, but only if we act fast. We encourage you to make a commitment to both the natural and built environment and for the citizens of Maryland by supporting this bill. AIA Maryland is glad to support this bill and we ask for your vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "ENOOK".

Elizabeth Nook, AIA
President