



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

HB 108

Title | Public Utilities- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programs-
Energy Performance Targets and Low-Income Housing

Position | Support

Economic Matters Committee

February 10, 2022

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

I am Staci Hartwell, Chair of the Environmental and Climate Justice Committee for the NAACP Maryland State Conference. We support HB 108.

Energy efficiency is an energy justice issue as well as an environmental issue. The legacy of racist housing policies and financial lending practices have negatively impacted housing quality in Black and Brown communities¹ creating energy issues that run the gamut- from bad insulation, to outdated heating and air conditioning equipment, advanced age of appliances, and building envelope failures. These conditions lead to a disproportionate burden of energy insecurity² as well as deadly health issues.

This issue plagues our communities and we share this burden with Hispanic households, Native Americans, older adults (65+) on fixed incomes, renters, and low-income, multi-family building residents.

To put this issue in numbers, a household's energy burden is the percentage of income spent on energy bills. A high energy burden is reported at above 6%. In Baltimore, almost a quarter of low-income households have an energy burden above 22%.³ This means, for every 100 dollars a family brings in, 22 of those dollars are unwaveringly committed to basic heating and cooling needs.

Energy efficiency is the low-hanging fruit in energy policy. "Using energy more efficiently is one of the fastest, most cost-effective ways" to lower utility bills and stabilize electricity prices for vulnerable houses.⁴

For these reasons, the NAACP Maryland State Conference request a favorable report on HB 108.

Respectfully Submitted,

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¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214629621004552>

² [Green & Healthy Homes Initiative](#)

³ https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/aceee-01_energy_burden_-_baltimore.pdf

⁴ <https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/local-energy-efficiency-benefits-and-opportunities>