



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony Prepared for the  
**Finance Committee**  
on  
**Senate Bill 524**  
February 15, 2022  
Position: **Favorable**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify about affordable housing and an energy regime that helps care for creation. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community with three synods in every part of our State.

We believe that lowering energy costs for consumers is a benefit of transitioning to carbon-reduction energy policy. Years ago, Baltimore Gas and Electric testified in the Maryland General Assembly that loss of Maryland's robust efficiency programs contributed to spikes in utility costs as a result of the deregulation of its market (Senate Finance, 2007). Price volatility was substituted for energy management and at least one result was to offer up low- and moderate-income households to price shocks.

Energy is essential for adequate housing, another concern of our community. We know now that lowering energy consumption lowers cost, as it presents the value of lowering carbon emissions. **Senate Bill 524** would contribute to both goals, more equitable housing and carbon reductions, by accessing Department of Housing and Community Development authority in the State's low-income housing stock. DHCD would procure or provide efficiency product and services in the next EmPOWER program cycle for deployment in the housing stock it manages.

We have long held that efficiency is one of the better ways to achieve lower cost and carbon emissions. For both reasons, and because more equitable housing may result, we support **Senate Bill 524** and urge a favorable report.

Lee Hudson