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Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) was created as a not-for-profit corporate instrumentality of state in 2008 through an act of the Maryland General Assembly.

MCEC focuses on an economic development mission to advance the adoption of clean energy and energy efficiency products, services and technologies along with the associated jobs and wages for Maryland. MCEC leverages private capital and private sector capabilities; facilitates the commercialization of innovative advanced energy technologies; strives to reduce energy costs for consumers, and drive reductions in greenhouse gas emissions associated with the use of fossil fuels.

Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee 02.24.22 1 PM

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

MCEC applauds the intention of this legislation, delineating a strategy for Maryland to develop and execute an action to plan for the state to be resilient in the face of possible future impacts of climate change.

As drafted, HB 706/SB 630 directs Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) to coordinate with the proposed Office of Resilience and be engaged in this work for two purposes aligned with its mission. MCEC already “promotes the use of electric heat, electric heat pumps, and (efficient) electric appliances to reduce the use of gas and other fossil fuels” as detailed in section 14-1204 B.5.II.

However, MCEC has concerns about the personnel and fiscal resources to address section 14-1204 B.5.I, which directs coordination with the center to “update and draft building codes to withstand flooding.” This work would require certain engineering expertise which MCEC does not have on staff, and may be redundant to the work being done by the Maryland Green Building Council. Without appropriate fiscal resources dedicated to achieve the desired outcome, MCEC would not be able to accomplish this directive.

Additionally, one of the core competencies of MCEC related to resilience is not called out in the coordination directives. MCEC focuses resources on sourcing capital for energy projects and infrastructure deployment and could provide expertise to assist in that regard. With appropriate funds made available, MCEC is also statutorily enabled to provide third party P3 project planning, design and procurement technical support; which could be of value in the effort to implement strategies to ensure resilience for the state, municipalities and vulnerable communities.

MCEC suggests the bill language be amended to strike the current language in 14-1204 B.5.I, and replace it with language directing MCEC to coordinate “on sourcing capital, providing technical support and procurement services for energy project and infrastructure deployment” to better enable the Office of Resilience to achieve desired outcomes.