



# Howard County Council

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Christiana Rigby  
Councilmember

District 3

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB0831

### Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions – Commercial and Residential Buildings

February 25, 2022

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the Committee. I am writing to express my support for HB0831, legislation introduced by Delegate Barve and Delegate Stein to enhance building standards, promote electrification, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland.

HB0831 would encourage the electrification of buildings in Maryland by requiring that all new buildings meet their water and space heating needs without the use of fossil fuels by 2023.

Additionally, this legislation establishes a process to retrofit existing commercial and multifamily buildings away from fossil fuels and toward more sustainable power sources.

These measures are incredibly important in our state's efforts to reduce emissions and combat climate change. According to the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, the use of fossil fuels in buildings currently accounts for roughly 13% of Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions. In their 2021 Annual Report, the Commission encouraged that the General Assembly work to ensure "that new buildings meet all water and space heating demand without the use of fossil fuels." This legislation is a major step toward meeting that goal.

Climate change is one of the greatest threats facing our world. In Maryland, climate change has contributed to rising temperatures, more frequent and severe weather events, and rapid sea level rise. We must meet this crisis head-on by taking forward-looking actions to safeguard the future of our community. Our efforts to reduce emissions and combat climate change must be holistic and span different sectors, including transportation, buildings, the energy grid, waste management, and more.

HB0831 is an important step forward for Maryland as we respond to the climate crisis and chart a sustainable path into the future. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. I respectfully encourage a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Christiana Rigby  
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