



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

Testimony Prepared for the  
**Environment and Transportation Committee**  
on  
**House Bill 831**  
February 25, 2022  
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify for advancing a net-zero energy regime in Maryland's building inventory. 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.

Energy sourcing is critical in housing and commercial building construction because it determines future energy demand. Energy demand management is critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We must begin building to a net-zero future now.

Maryland's robust construction market should not be built to standards that are carbon dependent. Transitioning to an inventory that uses less energy and produces less carbon emissions is necessary for accelerating GGRs. Building additional carbon-intensive structures only increases the time, expense, and effort it will require to transition later. Moving the inventory to something nearer all-electric, and expanding renewable energy demand, is the right way to build ourselves out of the warming/climate-crisis trap we've built ourselves into.

We hold that lowering carbon emissions is a social, economic, and moral necessity for the obvious reasons; fire, draught, flooding, sea rise, human displacement, storm catastrophe, infrastructure vulnerability. We support **House Bill 831** because it is an actual plan for carbon emissions reductions using State building code.

We are especially appreciative that it establishes a goal for retrofit, weatherization, and electric heating in *100% of the low-income housing stock*. This corner of the housing market typically is one of the last to receive treatments that qualify for the designation "appropriate."

Our concern for the environmental health and safety of our Maryland neighbors, and a livable and sustainable future for all earth's creatures, compels our support of **House Bill 831**, and we urge your favorable report.

Lee Hudson