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Executive Director

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**SUPPORT with AMENDMENTS: HB831**  
**Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Commercial and Residential Buildings**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports HB 831, and we thank Vice Chairman Stein for his leadership on the issues presented here. We are grateful for the suite of legislation before the House to make substantive reductions to our state greenhouse gas emissions.

The proposed legislation would require new commercial and residential buildings with a gross floor area greater than 25,000 sq. ft. to be built to a modified all-electric standard (water and space heating only). It would also specify reductions in direct emissions (those produced in heating and cooling the building) for existing buildings starting at a 20% reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2040 to be monitored under new Building Emissions Standards. Additionally, a Building Energy Transition Implementation Task Force will be established to help building owners manage the upfront costs of the transition to all-electric and to develop a plan to retrofit existing buildings.

We also agree with the amendments being submitted by Climate Partners, and would like to bring special attention to the following amendments to improve the bill and align components we supported in the Climate Solutions Now Act (SB 528) in the Senate:

**Climate Catalytic Capital Fund**

- SB 528, The Climate Solutions Now Act, creates a MCEC Climate Catalytic Capital Fund (C3). We recommend adding the C3 to HB 831 and we urge an increase in the amount of funds allocated to this initiative in order to ensure that it is sufficient to make a substantive contribution to the programs funded by the statewide green banks. Additionally, in this article, we ask that other statewide green banks that support funding projects that serve low and moderate income communities be eligible for receiving these funds. Most importantly, we strongly urge that this program follow the provisions of Justice 40 and require 40% of the Climate Catalytic Capital Fund investments be directed to overburdened communities as identified above (and in HB 1033).

## **Low Income Household Retrofits**

- On page 2, line 16-19, the legislation codifies the recommendation of the Maryland Climate Commission that we achieve 100% of holistic retrofits for low-income households by 2030 with little or no cost. We recommend a task force to provide input on this goal, with underserved communities represented (underserved as defined in HB 1330), as well as relevant non-profits to study the issue and make recommendations. The task force should make recommendations to MDE and MGA; require MDE to implement a plan to achieve the goal.

And finally, we recommend adding “energy efficiency” to new construction code requirements. The Maryland General Assembly notes that “energy efficiency is among the least expensive ways to meet the growing electricity demands of the State” and the American Council for an Energy Efficiency Economy reports that “Energy Efficiency Can Cut Energy Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Half by 2050.”

We respectfully offer and strongly advocate for the inclusion of these clarifying and strengthening amendments and Maryland LCV strongly urges a favorable report on this important bill.