



**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB689
Public Utilities -
Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions -
Alterations and Requirements**

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Jose Coronado-Flores , On Behalf of CASA

February 23, 2023

Dear Honorable Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

CASA is pleased to offer **favorable testimony in support of SB689 - Public Utilities - Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions - Alterations and Requirements**. CASA is the largest immigrant services and advocacy organization in Maryland, and in the Mid-Atlantic region, with a membership of over 120,000 Black and Latino immigrants and working families.

SB689 is important legislation that will address Maryland's residential emissions and promote electrification and energy efficiency in low-income households and multifamily residential buildings. In particular, we are invested in seeing this bill pass, because CASA members are overwhelmingly renters in multifamily buildings.

When it comes to retrofitting and advancing ubiquitous energy efficiency, low-income renters can be left out of the process or feel as if that cannot do anything, because they don't own their own homes. SB689 is an important bill, because it sees the value of renters and aims to work with owners of multifamily residential buildings to promote energy efficiency and reduce use of natural gas. Renters make up a large portion of Marylanders, and focusing on their adoption of energy efficient appliances and practices would make a great impact on reducing the state's emissions.

Low-income renters are usually the last to fully adopt new practices and technologies, but this bill gives them a chance to work with their landlords to be leaders in the state's goal of reducing fossil fuel use. Not only does this bill address greenhouse gas emission in residential buildings, but it also tangentially addresses housing conditions. Many of our members live in apartments where appliances and weatherization are subpar. With navigators to facilitate building retrofits, building owners can act to improve weatherization efforts and offer tenants new, more efficient, appliances to reduce electricity use and promote safer, more comfortable living situations.

With the benefits of improving housing conditions, offering low-income tenants a stake in greenhouse reductions, and lowering electric bills, SB689 is a worthy bill. CASA urges a favorable report.

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