



Maryland Energy Administration

TO: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plans
DATE: February 29, 2024

MEA Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) is heavily involved in the ongoing EmPOWER processes hosted by the Public Service Commission (PSC). MEA encourages the Committee to adopt the MEA and other State agencies' respective amendments (submitted separately) prior to rendering a favorable report as amended.

Several factors are putting upward pressure on utility costs for individuals and businesses; commodity prices, transmission and distribution projects, among others. This bill, including the various agency amendments, gives the PSC Commissioners the flexibility needed to incorporate costs, environmental impacts, energy goals, and a host of other factors into the EmPOWER goal-setting process; providing the most prudent approach to weigh the costs and benefits associated with each goal level within the context of broader State policy goals.

The language of the agency amendments was developed with the input of stakeholders including MEA, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), and it is an important step in helping us reach our energy and environmental goals, as established by the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022. It follows the established processes for EmPOWER program design and adoption, and it adds greenhouse gas abatement as part of the overall program and its associated goals.

Specifically, MEA would amend the language of the bill to:

- require that electric companies offer beneficial electrification as a part of their respective EmPOWER plans and program offerings; and
- alter language to reduce the risk of jeopardizing federal funds.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Landon Fahrig, Legislative Liaison, directly (landon.fahrig@maryland.gov, 410.931.1537).