



The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain

Senate Bill 258

***Department of General Services - State Buildings and Facilities - Energy
Conservation and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions***

Position: Support

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Date: March 20, 2024

From: Jeremy D. Baker

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** SB 258. The bill demonstrates efforts to lead by example on energy conservation best practices by the Maryland Department of General Services (DGS). This bill would strengthen the State’s goals in reducing energy consumption in State buildings to better align with statewide greenhouse gas (“GHG”) reduction goals.

Bill Summary

The bill increases the present requirement to reduce energy consumption in State-owned buildings, from 10% below 2018 levels by 2029 to 20% below 2018 levels by 2031. DGS must conduct an audit of at least 2 million square feet of State buildings annually, identifying best practices and low-cost measures to increase energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions. While existing law allows an energy audit for only the least-efficient State-owned buildings, the bill would allow DGS to audit any State-owned building. Units operating in spaces subject to an energy audit would be required to implement measures and engage in one year of energy use monitoring and emission reductions tracking.

Position Rationale

This bill assists Maryland in meeting its climate change pollution reduction goals by establishing and implementing an energy savings target for State facilities. DGS will be better able to: (1) collect data for benchmarking reporting purposes; (2) use an energy consumption database tool; (3) establish a more ambitious net zero goal under the Green Building Council for new buildings and major renovation projects; and (4) create a statewide goal of 20% reductions in energy consumption. The Climate Solutions Now Act requires that Building Energy Performance Standards ([BEPS](#)) aim for 20% statewide covered buildings emissions reductions by 2030 and net-zero by 2040, including State facilities that are 35,000 square feet or larger. The bill aligns State agencies’ ability to be in compliance with BEPS, as well as with Governor Moore’s Executive Order 01.01.2023.7 on [Leading by Example in State Government](#).

For the reasons detailed above, MDE urges a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 258.

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