



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

SB 175 – Public Safety - Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing for Fuel Gas Piping Systems - Requirements and Prohibitions

DATE: February 6, 2025
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **SB 175 – Public Safety - Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing for Fuel Gas Piping Systems - Requirements and Prohibitions** a favorable report. This bill will improve building safety and protect Maryland residents and first responders by requiring that all Corrugated Stainless-Steel Tubing (CSST) be able to withstand 36 Coulombs.


Since 2018, the state of Maryland has experienced three fatalities (two firefighters/one civilian) because of fires caused by lightning-induced failure of CSST. The State has also experienced several non-fatal, though extremely destructive, fires that have been linked to malfunctioning CSST. This issue became deeply personal to Frederick County when a CSST-related fire in 2021 resulted in the line-of-duty death of Frederick County Battalion Chief Josh Laird. While legislation was passed in 2022 to ban non-arc-resistant CSST, further measures are needed to protect our firefighters, first responders, and residents.

The current requirement for CSST to be arc-resistant only ensures that CSST can withstand 4.5 coulombs, per the national standard CSA/ANSI LC-1, which can be met by the LC1024 listing criteria. Unfortunately, this level of protection is insufficient when the average lightning strike in the US is approximately 15-28 Coulombs and can be much higher. This means that even arc-resistant and/or properly installed CSST is highly vulnerable to malfunction, and higher safety standards are needed.

This bill, as amended, does not focus on a specific listing criteria, but instead sets a floor for the level of electrical arcing charge that the product must be able to withstand. This amended language ensures that all manufacturers have the opportunity to create safer products using these clear metrics.

As local and state governments, we have a responsibility to our constituents, including our first responders, to adopt laws, regulations, and building codes that ensure the safety of our communities. Adopting stronger safety standards for the energy systems in our buildings is one simple way we can uphold that responsibility.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 175. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.


Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD