

MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



SB779 Climate Solutions Now Act Affordability Act of 2025 Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment February 27th, 2025

Position: Favorable

Background: SB779 would require the State to consider economic feasibility when regulating and enforcing the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Alliance (MRA) strongly supports **SB779 Climate Solutions Now Act Affordability Act of 2025**. As we have shared on other bills related to building energy performance standards (BEPS), the cost of compliance to reach the State's established greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets is staggering. According to feedback provided from our members who have already begun building renovations and equipment upgrades in an effort to achieve compliance, the technology that is currently available is insufficient to reach the established reductions targets. One MRA member operating nine family-owned grocery stores in Maryland has reported that despite spending \$7 million to renovate one location in 2024 and upgrading all lighting and refrigeration equipment in the store, they were only able to achieve a reduction in their emissions of about 15%. Additionally, businesses are currently facing the highest energy costs in five years as a result of both rate increases which were authorized by the State and the passage of SB1 in 2024 which has resulted in many competitive energy suppliers ceasing to operate in Maryland.

Requiring the State to consider economic practicability of compliance for these environmental policies could positively impact businesses that are making a good faith effort to reach reductions goals but are hampered by the cost, availability, and efficacy of equipment. We would strongly urge the Committee to vote favorably on SB779. Thank you for your consideration.