



# TOWN OF OCEAN CITY

*The White Marlin Capital of the World*

March 4, 2025

Environment and Transportation Committee  
The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: HB-1414 Building Energy Performance Standards – Public Safety, Emergency,  
and Public Utility Buildings – Exclusion

Dear Chairman Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation  
Committee,

The current state requirement for building energy performance standards requires  
buildings essentially requires all buildings larger than 35,000 to convert to all electric  
heating and cooling systems by 2040.

This requirement causes problems for buildings that serve as Emergency Response  
facilities or emergency shelters. Power outages are common during natural disasters  
and in Ocean City we have consistently strived to make our critical infrastructure  
capable to remain operational during a power outage. In the case of our Public Safety  
Building, this involved using fuel oil to heat the building. Although the entire building is located  
above the 100-year flood elevation, the emergency generator is located inside the building on the  
2nd floor. This elevates the generator well above even the most catastrophic flooding event and  
protects the generator from wind born debris. In order to do this, we had to limit the size of the  
generator. Using fuel oil to heat the building gave us the double advantage of limiting the  
generator size, since typically the largest energy load on a building is the heating system, as well  
as having a single large storage tank to hold fuel for both the heating system and the generator.  
This allows us to operate the building, completely self-sustained for 10 full days before the fuel  
oil tank needs to be re-filled. Moving to an all-electric heat would require a generator that would  
be too large and possibly too heavy to fit in the location of the existing generator.

Similarly, the Roland E. Powell Convention Center was recently converted from electric  
resistance heat to natural gas. One of the reasons for the conversion was that the convention  
center did not have sufficient back up power to heat the building due to the extremely high loads  
required from the electric heating system. Having natural gas heat allows us to heat the building  
in the event of a power outage making it available as a shelter.

**MAYOR**

Richard W. Meehan

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Requiring emergency operations buildings and public shelters to convert to all electric heating systems will limit their ability to remain operational during a power outage unless extremely large generators capable of handling the large load demand of electric heating systems are funded and installed.

HB-1414 would exempt these types of facilities from the requirement to convert to full electric thereby preserving their ability to properly function during emergencies.

We respectfully ask for a favorable recommendation on HB-1414.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard W. Meehan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent than the last name "Meehan".

Richard W. Meehan  
Mayor