

BENJAMIN BROOKS
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee

Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 344
Property Tax Credit- Retail Service Station Conversions

Ways & Means Committee
March 18, 2025

Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Wilkins and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB 344, Property Tax Credit – Retail Service Station Conversions. The purpose of this bill is to allow the Counties and Baltimore City to grant property tax credits for property owners who convert former retail service stations into new residential and retail uses.

In the past few years, major automobile manufacturers such as Ford, Honda, General Motors, and many more have pledged to dedicate 50% to 100% of their sales to electric vehicles by 2030 or sooner. The writing is on the wall for retail service stations— gas-powered cars (or internal combustion engines,) are being phased out and we need to plan for a future where consumers are simply not purchasing gas at the level they used to. Rather than allowing hundreds of viable properties to remain abandoned and under-utilized, we should embrace this transition as an opportunity to revitalize communities and create pathways for new growth and opportunities.

SB 344 will authorize counties and Baltimore City to provide property tax credits for real properties that have been repurposed from a retail service station to alternative uses. These could include mixed commercial and residential areas but exclude nuisance businesses such as self-storage facilities and discount retail stores. It will help to offset the significant cost of converting these sites, including expenses related to addressing and/or removing underground storage tanks.

This tax credit for retail service station conversions will have the potential of transforming our neighborhoods, thus, paving the way for new homes and job opportunities for Marylanders. It is time to start taking the necessary steps to uplift communities, preserve local economies, protect the environment, and conserve the future of our planet.

For these reasons, I am requesting a favorable report of SB 344.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the phrase "With kindest regards,".

Benjamin Brooks