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Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committees

Administrative, Executive,
and Legislative Review
Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural
Land Preservation

**Senate Bill 479 – Environment - Building Energy Performance Standards and Energy Use Intensity
Targets - Exemptions**

February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 479 provides a balanced and pragmatic approach to advancing Maryland’s climate goals while recognizing the economic realities faced by building owners. By exempting covered buildings that received a use and occupancy permit before June 1, 2022, from immediate compliance with building energy performance standards and energy use intensity targets, the bill prevents undue financial burden on property owners who would otherwise be forced into costly retrofits prematurely. This exemption ensures that compliance occurs naturally during major system replacements—such as lighting, HVAC, or other critical components—rather than imposing disruptive and expensive upgrades on functioning infrastructure. Such a phased approach promotes sustainability without compromising economic stability or operational continuity for businesses and institutions.

Furthermore, SB 479 aligns with Maryland’s long-term environmental objectives while fostering fairness and flexibility. The bill acknowledges that older buildings often face structural and technological limitations that make rapid compliance challenging and cost-prohibitive. By tying compliance to the natural lifecycle of major building systems, the legislation encourages incremental progress toward energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction without penalizing owners for circumstances beyond their control. This measured strategy supports Maryland’s commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2040 while maintaining a cooperative relationship between regulators and stakeholders, ultimately ensuring that environmental progress is both achievable and economically responsible.

I thank you for your time and I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike McKay'.

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties