March 20, 2026

Senator Brian Feldman
Chair
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly

Dear Senator Feldman:

On behalf of the Building Performance Association, our dozens of contractor member businesses in Maryland, and the broader energy efficiency industry in the state, I am writing to express our concerns regarding the specific provisions in HB 1532 which would significantly reduce funding for the EmPOWER energy efficiency program. Maryland home performance contractors work with Maryland residents every day to help them lower their energy bills, and EmPOWER programs play a critical role in making those upgrades possible. We know the challenges that Maryland residents are facing from their utility bills, but reducing energy efficiency would exacerbate this problem and would miss an important opportunity to expand on Governor Moore's expressed goals to address energy affordability.

Maryland is among the strongest states in the nation in the scope and performance of its energy efficiency programs, and the nearly two decades of success of EmPOWER demonstrate the leadership and forethought of the General Assembly and the Moore Administration in establishing and expanding the program. I urge you to amend HB 1532 to protect EmPOWER by sustaining the overall program goals and restoring energy efficiency for the nearly half of Maryland homes heated with natural gas to the EmPOWER program. Energy efficiency represents decarbonization, in electric, gas, or propane heated homes while saving money for every Marylander.

- **Energy Efficiency Fixes High Utility Bills – Permanently:** The National Laboratory of the Rockies estimates that cost-effective energy efficiency upgrades could save Marylanders $1.1 billion annually in energy costs – representing a 30% decrease of energy use in the state.[1] While these cost-effective measures should pay for themselves, the up-front cost and affordability of home upgrades remains a critical barrier for many households. The EmPOWER program bridges this gap by reducing up-front costs, unlocking long-term savings for decades to come.

- **Energy Efficiency Creates Jobs:** There are over 69,000 workers employed across more than 7,000 businesses in the energy efficiency sector in Maryland.[2] I am enclosing our recent fact sheet, the Faces of EE Jobs, which highlights how energy efficiency is integrated across our communities and workforce. The vast majority of these businesses are small businesses. These businesses have hired staff and invested in training and equipment based on the EmPOWER programs – programs which the state has been working to expand over the past few years. Continuity of the program is critical for these contractor small businesses. A "temporary" reduction in EmPOWER funding will lead to a loss of jobs; recovering contractor participation

[1] National Laboratory of the Rockies, "Residential Energy Efficiency Potential – Maryland," accessed March 16, 2026, https://resstock.nlr.gov/factsheets/MD
[2] Building Performance Association, "Maryland Energy Efficiency Jobs in America," 2025, https://building-performance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/21_Maryland.pdf

in these programs could take a decade or more, as many contractors may remain wary of investing in these programs in the future.

- **Energy Efficiency Saves on Grid Costs:** EmPOWER provides long-term savings not just for those who receive rebates, but for all ratepayers. By lowering peak electric demand, Maryland can reduce capacity payments to PJM and reduce utility spending on grid infrastructure. For example, the BGE EmPOWER program in 2025 cost residential customers approximately $130 per year; at the same time, the energy efficiency upgrades yielded 129 Megawatts of reduced peak load, at an estimated *savings of more than $155 per residential customer*[3]—more than the $12/month the cuts hope to save. Across all electric utilities, the EmPOWER program returned 94% of the entire program cost in electric system benefits alone – not even accounting for the benefits to the homeowner or the environment. This is a prime example of how energy efficiency programs reduce costs – not just for homeowners who make the upgrade, but for all ratepayers. If Maryland wants to help families save on $155 on their energy bills each year, it should keep doing what it is already doing and sustain the full EmPOWER program.

Maryland can fully sustain EmPOWER and still achieve savings for ratepayers while simultaneously supporting the critical program infrastructure that contractors, small businesses, and homeowners rely on to help make their homes safer, more comfortable, and more efficient. I therefore urge you and the Committee to amend HB 1532 to protect EmPOWER through the following modifications:

- Sustain the EmPOWER savings goals at 2.5% and remove provisions to provide savings credit for projects not currently funded by EmPOWER; and

- Restore gas utility authorities to participate in EmPOWER, which will protect critical funding for insulation upgrades in homes heated by natural gas – leading to lower bills for households and lower emissions for Maryland.

We know that Maryland is facing critical challenges regarding energy affordability – I feel it personally. And we appreciate that you are faced with difficult decisions on how to protect Maryland residents from rising utility costs. But we urge you to protect EmPOWER so we can support Maryland ratepayers this year, next year, and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Kara Saul Rinaldi
Chief Policy Officer
Building Performance Association
Takoma Park, MD 20912

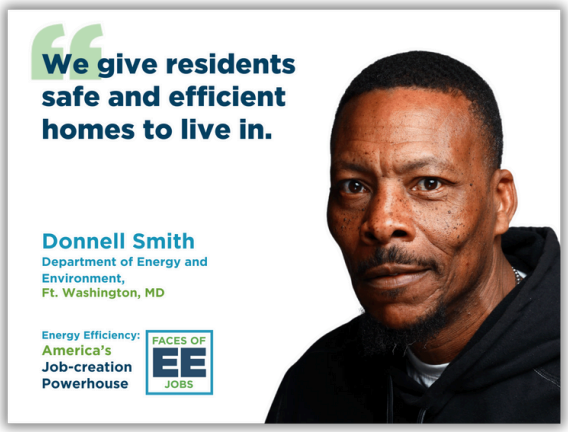
Enclosure:
Faces of EE Jobs - Maryland

[3] Based on analysis by the AnnDyl Policy Group, March 20, 2026; full analysis available at: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1chpoQeKIR6fbxhnaw1JekDF_-7q7Hxhb4vamdFHWRBE/edit?usp=sharing

FACES OF EE JOBS

69,489 Jobs

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY INDUSTRY



Maryland's energy efficiency industry creates good jobs, lowers bills, and strengthens the economy.

69,489 people work in Maryland's energy efficiency sector.

Energy efficiency jobs are in every Maryland county. Woven through communities via manufacturing, construction, professional services, and more, EE jobs are the backbone of the energy sector.

Support for energy efficiency will save Marylanders money and boost local economies.

Please support policies and programs that will enable Maryland's energy efficiency sector to create jobs and provide benefits for communities.

Faces of EE is an educational initiative led by the Building Performance Association, a nonprofit industry association dedicated to making all homes energy-efficient, comfortable, healthy, and safe.

© 2025 Building Performance Association. All rights reserved.

Sources: USEER; BW Research Partnership

: @FacesofEE

Visit Building-Performance.org

Introducing a few of **Maryland's 69,400+** energy efficiency pros

@FacesofEE

Brendon Baatz
Gabel Associates, Inc.
Silver Spring, MD

David Ball
Cameron Group
Hagerstown, MD

Naomi Baum
ACEEE
Silver Spring, MD

Clarence Beckett
Shore Up! Inc.
Salisbury, MD

"I am an energy analyst. I help people improve their homes."

Mike Havrilla
Zerodraft Maryland
Nottingham, MD

Energy Efficiency: America's Job-creation Powerhouse
FACES OF EE JOBS

Virginia Cameron
Cameron Group
Severna Park, MD

Rosa Cassidy
Lockheed Martin
Rockville, MD

Colin Choney
Standard Energy Solutions
Pasadena, MD

Rick Counihan
AmnDyl Policy Group
Takoma Park, MD

"We holistically remediate health hazards in family homes."

Dawn Boyd
Department of Energy and Environment,
Waldorf, MD

Energy Efficiency: America's Job-creation Powerhouse
FACES OF EE JOBS

James Conlon
Elysian Energy
Silver Spring, MD

Tony Crane
Efficient Home
Bethesda, MD

Lana Crouse
United States Green Building Council
Rockville, MD

Richard Dexter
Home Energy Hero
Westminster, MD

Sapna Gheewala Dowla
Alliance to Save Energy
Germantown, MD

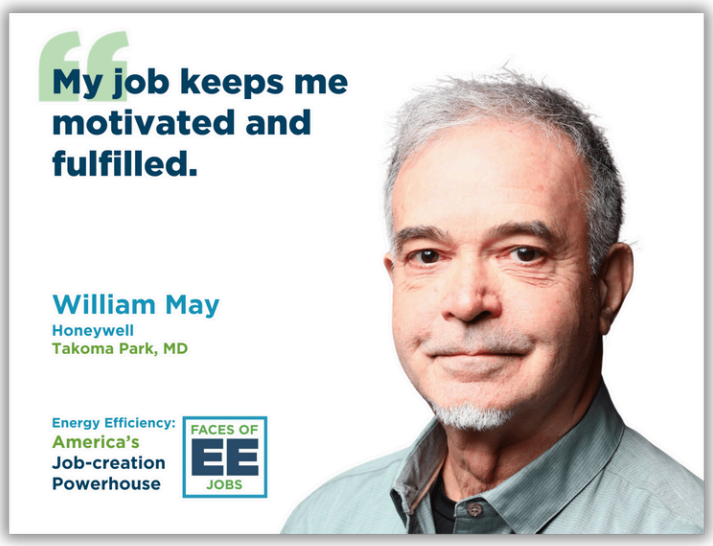
Neal Elliott
ACEEE
Silver Spring, MD

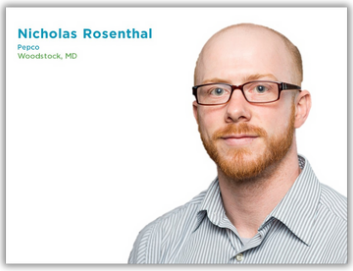
Michelle Griffith
Devere Home Performance
Glenburnie, MD

Bobby Hight
Comfort Kings
Chesapeake Beach, MD

Introducing a few of **Maryland's 69,400+** energy efficiency pros

@FacesofEE





This sample shows the variety of jobs in the energy efficiency industry and highlights the potential for growth when workforce development and training are prioritized.

Note: Some individuals pictured may have changed jobs since they joined Faces of EE.