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March 5, 2026

**Oppose: SB 834 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programs, Services,  
and Plans - Moratorium**

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV Opposes SB 834.

SB 834 would impose a moratorium on Maryland's energy efficiency and conservation programs beginning July 1, 2026 – effectively halting implementation and enforcement of the State's core efficiency framework while utilities continue recovering past costs. This approach stops future savings while customers continue paying for prior investments.

Energy efficiency is widely recognized as the lowest-cost energy affordability resource available. Programs authorized under §7-222, including EmPOWER Maryland, reduce overall electricity demand, lower peak system costs, and help avoid expensive new generation and transmission infrastructure. Since its launch in 2008, [EmPOWER Maryland has generated approximately \\$14.5 billion in savings](#) from installed energy efficiency measures. In 2024 alone, the [program reduced summer peak demand](#) by roughly **1,000 megawatts**, comparable to the output of up to three gas peaker plants. These savings benefit all ratepayers, not just program participants.

SB 834 does not eliminate the recovery of past program costs – it only eliminates future benefits. Utilities would continue to recover unpaid and unamortized costs incurred before July 1, 2026, while customers would lose access to ongoing energy-saving programs that lower bills. A moratorium on energy efficiency programs would increase long-term energy costs to Marylanders and undermine the State's efforts to meet its climate goals.

At a time of rising electricity demand and affordability concerns, Maryland should be strengthening cost-effective efficiency programs – not suspending them. Energy efficiency remains the most immediate and affordable tool available to reduce energy burdens for households and businesses. Maryland LCV urges an unfavorable report on this bill.

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