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March 5, 2026

Oppose: SB 801 - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, EmPOWER Energy Efficiency Programs, and Net Energy Metering

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV Opposes SB 801 - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, EmPOWER Energy Efficiency Programs, and Net Energy Metering.

SB 801 would require Maryland to withdraw from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), eliminate the surcharge that funds EmPOWER energy efficiency programs, and reduce compensation for net energy metering. Together, these measures would increase energy costs for Marylanders, weaken climate progress, and undermine programs that deliver energy savings.

Since joining RGGI in 2007, [Maryland has received more than \\$1.6 billion](#) in proceeds from the auction of carbon allowances, which are invested through the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) to support energy efficiency upgrades, renewable energy deployment, bill assistance, and weatherization programs that lower energy costs for households and businesses, often serving low-income and overburdened communities. These investments also improve public health by reducing harmful co-pollutants from fossil fuel generation. Withdrawing from RGGI would eliminate this dedicated funding stream and significantly reduce investments in the very programs that keep energy bills down.

SB 801 further undermines affordability by eliminating the surcharge mechanism that funds EmPOWER – one of Maryland’s most cost-effective tools for reducing electricity demand and delivering long-term reductions to customer bills. EmPOWER programs continue to deliver valuable cost savings for energy consumers statewide. According to the [latest program report](#) from the Maryland Public Service Commission, for every dollar spent by utilities or participants, the EmPOWER Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE&C) programs generated approximately \$2.21 in benefits. Weakening or destabilizing this funding structure would jeopardize a proven program that consistently saves customers more than it costs.

30 West Street, Suite C
Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-280-9855

www.mdlc.org

The bill also reduces the value of net energy metering, weakening incentives for customer-sited solar that provides direct bill savings, strengthens grid resilience, and attracts private investment.

Maryland LCV is working to Power Maryland Forward – advancing energy affordability through solar and storage deployment, protecting consumers from unchecked fossil fuel dependence and excessive utility profits, and maximizing the efficiency of the electricity grid we have. SB 801 moves the state in the opposite direction. Maryland LCV urges an unfavorable report on this bill.