



**Testimony on HB 870**  
**Large Buildings for Tomorrow Act**  
**House Environment and Transportation Committee**

**Date: February 25, 2026**

**Position: SUPPORT**

[Maryland Climate Partners](#) strongly supports **HB 870**, which would cut pollution from Maryland's buildings and reduce heating and cooling bills by establishing energy efficiency standards for new buildings of 35,000 sq feet or more beginning October 1, 2028.

Maryland Climate Partners is a coalition of twenty environmental, faith, consumer advocacy, and social justice organizations focused on ensuring equitable implementation of the Climate Solutions Now Act (CSNA). The coalition formed in 2021 to support the passage of bold climate legislation, and we continue to advocate for policies that ensure full and equitable implementation of the CSNA.

A cornerstone of Maryland's [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#)—our pathway to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045—are the Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS). BEPS is designed to document and analyze building energy usage through benchmarking, improve energy efficiency across Maryland's building stock, and achieve zero net direct greenhouse gas emissions from covered buildings by 2040. By reducing overall energy demand, BEPS help Maryland stay on track to meet its statewide climate goals.

Air pollution remains a significant public health challenge in Maryland, and **buildings alone account for 16% of total statewide greenhouse gas emissions**. Maryland families deserve buildings that are healthier, more affordable to operate, and designed to meet the state's climate goals from the outset. Poorly performing buildings lock in decades of unnecessary pollution and energy costs, while efficient buildings reduce strain on the electric grid, improve indoor air quality, and lower long-term operating expenses.

**HB 870** advances these goals by directing the Department of Labor to adopt, by regulation, the International Building Code, including the International Energy Conservation Code, for new construction of buildings 35,000 square feet or larger beginning October 1, 2028. Incorporating these standards into BEPS ensures that new large buildings meet modern energy efficiency requirements at the time they are constructed—avoiding costly upgrades

down the line. As a result, these buildings will consume less energy, produce fewer emissions, and cost less to heat and cool over their lifetimes.

In addition to reducing climate pollution, **HB 870** would deliver meaningful cost savings for building owners and occupants by lowering long-term energy expenses and avoiding expensive retrofits. Requiring modern efficiency standards at the time of construction is far more cost-effective than correcting inefficient design years later. These savings are especially important as Maryland works to manage rising electricity demand and volatile energy prices, helping stabilize costs for households, businesses, and institutions alike.

Maryland must use every available tool to address the dual challenge of rising energy demand and increasing energy costs. **HB 870** is a practical, forward-looking solution that prevents wasteful energy use in large new buildings before it is locked in for decades. By setting clear, modern efficiency standards at the time of construction, Maryland can reduce pollution, lower long-term costs, and build a more reliable and affordable energy future.

We strongly urge a **favorable report on HB 870**.