



HB0870 - SUPPORT
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HB0870 – Maryland building Energy Performance Standards – Energy
Conservation Requirements (Large Buildings for Tomorrow Act)

Meeting of the Environment and Transportation Committee

February 25, 2026

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on HB0870, the Large Buildings for Tomorrow Act.

Elders Climate Action is a nationwide organization devoted to ensuring that our children, grandchildren, and future generations have a world in which they can thrive. The Maryland Chapter has members across the state.

Each day, we see the climate crisis more clearly. We know that Maryland is at risk for sea level rise, flooding from intense rainfall, heat waves, and other extreme weather events. Maryland can also be a leader in moving us to a safer, cleaner future where we all can thrive. Building better buildings is essential for that future.

Buildings are one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland. They are also a major source of air pollution, which has many adverse health effects, including asthma, other respiratory illnesses, and heart disease.

In 2022, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Climate Solutions Now Act, which made Maryland a national leader in addressing the climate crisis. One key

feature of the act was the creation of the Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS). The Maryland Department of the Environment has developed regulations to implement those standards, which apply to existing buildings that are 35,000 square feet or larger.

Currently, all of Maryland except Montgomery County (which has its own BEPS program) is in a benchmarking period that ends in 2030. Owners of buildings covered by BEPS need to submit benchmarking data, but they do not have to meet the interim standards until 2030. The interim standards will become more rigorous in 2035, and the final standards will take effect in 2040.

The developer of a new large building might choose to build it in a way that would prevent the owner from meeting BEPS standards when required. That's a bad choice for the environment and for the property owner, who would be faced with expensive upgrades to an almost-new building.

HB0870 directs 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 over beginning October 1, 2028. Adoption of these codes in Maryland ensures that future buildings avoid costly upgrades by complying with energy-efficiency standards when they are constructed. These buildings will consume less energy, be less polluting, and be cheaper to heat and cool.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable report on HB0870, the Large Buildings for Tomorrow Act. Thank you for your time and consideration.