

SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC BUILDINGS AMERICA INC.

HB119 – Energy Performance Contracts - Navigators, Funding, and Requirements Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Favorable With Amendments

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is John Fiastro, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of my client, Schneider Electric Buildings America Inc. Schneider Electric is an energy services company and has developed projects across the country and is in stages of development with several Maryland counties and municipalities. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation.

Support for Maryland’s Energy Goals

Schneider Electric strongly supports the State’s commitment to improving energy efficiency and transparency for public bodies. We commend the bill’s intention to offer technical guidance and resources for energy performance contracts. However, as written, HB119 presents two primary concerns regarding public body autonomy and the appropriate role of the Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) and its navigators.

Key Concerns & Recommendations:

1. Mandatory Notification and Navigator Requirement

The current language requires all public bodies to notify, and work with, regional navigators provided by MCEC before entering into any energy performance contract. This requirement could create unnecessary administrative hurdles, delay critical energy efficiency projects, and limit public bodies’ autonomy in selecting their preferred partners.

2. Navigator Role: Technical Assistance Only

Navigators should strictly serve as impartial technical advisors, not as business development agents, project originators, or vendor selectors. Additionally, their services should only be provided in response to direct, voluntary outreach by public bodies—ensuring an “opt-in” model of support.

Proposed Amendments

To align HB119 with these principles and preserve both effectiveness and choice, we respectfully recommend the following amendments:

Amend Section 17–1002(A):

Replace the mandatory notification language with:

“A public body may, at its discretion, request technical assistance from the navigator for its region prior to entering into an energy performance contract. Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to require notification of, or engagement with, a navigator or the Maryland Clean Energy Center unless such assistance is voluntarily requested by the public body.”

Amend Section 17–1001(C) and Navigator Duties:

1. Clarify that “navigator” means an individual solely providing impartial technical advice and guidance.
2. Prohibit navigators from engaging in business development, project solicitation, or vendor selection activities.
3. Require navigators and MCEC to respond only to incoming, voluntary requests for assistance.

Add Autonomy Provision:

Explicitly state that *“Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to limit a public body’s existing ability to independently select energy service providers or methods for pursuing energy performance contracts.”*

Conclusion

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and urge the Committee to adopt these amendments. These changes will ensure HB119 strengthens technical support for public entities without imposing unnecessary barriers or undermining market competition.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am available to answer any questions or provide additional information as needed.

Respectfully,

John Fiastro

Fiastro Consulting On Behalf of Schneider Electric Buildings America Inc.