



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

House Bill 870

Maryland Building Performance Standards – Energy Conservation Requirements (Large Buildings for Tomorrow Act)

Date: February 25, 2026

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

Position: **FAVORABLE**

From: Gussie Maguire,
MD Staff Scientist

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS House Bill 870** which enhances energy efficiency requirements for new construction buildings subject to the Building Energy Performance Standard. These buildings would be required to meet predicted annual net greenhouse gas emissions of zero and predicted annual site energy use performance targets set by the Department of the Environment. The bill further requires that buildings must meet these standards regardless of fuel type: both electrified and natural gas-heated structures must meet energy efficiency requirements.

In addition to contributing to climate change through the release of greenhouse gases, natural gas and other fossil fuels emit nitrogen oxides, which account for a significant proportion of nitrogen pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Electrification of buildings reduces emissions from natural gas-fueled furnaces, water heaters, and dryers, which worsen both indoor and outdoor air quality, but much of Maryland's electricity still comes from fossil fuels. Stringent requirements for energy efficiency and net zero emissions in new buildings will help ensure that as Maryland electrifies, new structures require less energy; paired with the state's ongoing progress towards renewable energy generation, this bill will help move the state closer to its climate and energy use goals.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 870.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.