



Testimony in Support of House Bill 1040
Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund – Mandated Uses – Climate Programs
House Environment & Transportation Committee and House Appropriations
Committee
Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 1:00 PM
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Chair and members of the committees, thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi. For purposes of identification, I serve on the Maryland Climate Commission and numerous boards. However, as a resident of Maryland, I am testifying on my own behalf and that of our philanthropy. I strongly support House Bill 1040.

Right now, families across our state are focused on three priorities: saving money, strengthening our economy, and protecting the people they love. This bill helps achieve all three.

First, it helps people save money.

Energy bills are putting real pressure on families and small businesses. Investing in efficiency and modern technology lowers costs over time and protects people from volatile fuel prices. Lower utility bills mean more money in people’s pockets and greater financial stability. Strategic investments, including through the Maryland Clean Energy Center, help scale cost-saving solutions that reduce monthly expenses while strengthening Maryland’s energy system.

Second, it strengthens Maryland’s economy.

This bill creates predictable, long-term investment in growing industries such as construction, advanced manufacturing, electrical work, and modern energy technologies. These are good-paying, local jobs that cannot be outsourced. It supports workforce training and helps Maryland businesses compete, innovate, and lead.

The Maryland Clean Energy Center has demonstrated the power of this approach. Since 2009, it has achieved more than a 10-to-1 return on investment, leveraging over \$238 million in private capital against just over \$23 million in public funding. A recent analysis by BEACON at Salisbury University found that this work has generated over \$621 million in economic impact, supported more than 3,000 jobs, and produced over \$82 million in tax revenue. This is exactly the kind of high-return, fiscally responsible investment Maryland should scale.

Third, it protects the people and places we all love.

Extreme heat and cold, stronger storms, and power outages are becoming more dangerous and more expensive. Investments in resilience help keep the lights on, protect public health, and reduce long-term disaster and recovery costs. The partnerships and financing tools supported by this bill, including those advanced through the Maryland Clean Energy Center, allow the state to work with the private sector to build more resilient and affordable energy systems.

The funding in this bill would be used to:

- Help families and small businesses upgrade to more efficient heating, cooling, and appliances that lower monthly energy bills
- Expand solar power, including community solar, to give more people access to affordable energy
- Support electric vehicle infrastructure and cleaner transportation to reduce fuel costs and improve air quality
- Increase energy efficiency, especially in low- and moderate-income households
- Build stronger, more reliable energy systems, including microgrids and resiliency hubs that keep power on during outages
- Provide rebates and support for innovation and economic development
- Upgrade school buildings to lower operating costs and improve indoor air quality
- Invest in electric school buses to reduce pollution and fuel expenses
- Support workforce training so Marylanders can access good-paying jobs
- Improve state facilities and infrastructure to reduce taxpayer costs over time

Importantly, this bill brings discipline and predictability to how we use the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund. Stable funding also enables high-performing entities such as the Maryland Clean Energy Center to leverage private capital, expand partnerships, and scale solutions that deliver measurable economic and affordability benefits for Marylanders.

Doing nothing is not free. **Delaying action means significantly higher disaster costs, higher health care costs, and higher energy bills. Smart investments today save taxpayers money tomorrow.**

House Bill 1040 is about fiscal responsibility, economic strength, and protecting Marylanders. I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration.