



TESTIMONY FOR HB1040

Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund - Mandated Uses - Climate Change Programs

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Stein

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1040 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) is a valuable tool that can be used to support our transition to clean energy and ensure that residents are financially supported in making the transition. However, the SEIF has become a political football – used to shore up state revenue shortfalls and not focused on the big picture of what we are trying to achieve.

This bill, if enacted, brings discipline and predictability to how we use the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund. Instead of short-term or scattered spending, it makes strategic investments that reduce risk, save money, and strengthen our economy.

It will –

- 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

Maryland needs more discipline in spending such an important fund and ensuring that it is helping us achieve the goals it was created for. We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.