



Chairman Dereck Davis  
Vice-Chair Kathleen Dumais Members  
House Economic Matters Committee  
241 House Ofc Bldg  
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 26, 2021

**HB40 – MD Energy Administration Study on Geothermal Heating and Cooling  
Systems and Geothermal Energy Workgroup  
Position – Favorable**

Good afternoon Chairman Davis and members of the House Economic Matters Committee. My name is Rick Binetti, here on behalf of LiUNA's Baltimore Washington District Council. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 40.

This is a good bill. It is not lost on the building trades community that the committee and General Assembly are beginning to make labor a top priority when considering Maryland's policy as it transitions to a greener energy infrastructure.

In whatever form, or however long it takes, the transition to greener energy in Maryland MUST include a blueprint for the transition of meaningful employment for trade workers currently working in the energy industry. These are well paid, middle-class, family-sustaining jobs, with millions of manhours on the line. They can't just go away without a statewide plan. They are simply too important to the state's economy.

The General Assembly has made some strides by including pro-labor language in recent clean energy legislation, 2019's Clean Energy Jobs Act being the prime example. But the State needs to do more. Bills like this, exploring how to grow the use of geothermal energy, while creating and transitioning middle class jobs, can be a positive continuation of exploring effective clean energy labor policy.

We know there are not likely to be the same number jobs created in the green energy economy as there are today's energy economy. We have seen this thus far in MD's solar industry. Incentives and credits may be making the industry profitable, but they aren't creating the kind of middle-class, career building jobs so important to building the state's economy.

By leveraging public infrastructure, and incentivizing geothermal on large-scale commercial or residential projects, Maryland has an opportunity to do both. Geothermal can put a lot of laborers, steamfitters, operators and many other craft people to work. RPS policies are helping grow clean energy use in Maryland. These policies should also focus on growing the middle class.

We urge a favorable report on HB 40. Thank you.