

30 January, 2022

Delegate C. T. Wilson
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Recommendations for House Bill 0031
MEA – Resiliency Hub Grant Program and Fund

Dear Chairman Wilson and members of the Economic Matters Committee:

I am writing to voice AIA Maryland's support for House Bill 0031. AIA Maryland represents nearly 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and advocates for the profession and the quality of the built environment. As architects we work every day to design the future now, including addressing the changing climate and creating resilient communities. At a time when extreme weather events are increasingly common and Low and Moderate Income/LMI communities specifically are suffering the effects of environmental degradation, population growth, and migration, *resilience* – of both buildings and communities – is of the highest importance. Among our responsibilities as architects, we design environments that adapt to evolving conditions, reduce harm and property damage, and more readily, efficiently, and effectively recover from adverse events. House Bill 0031 is a step in that direction.

This program provides grant funding for the development and construction of solar plus energy storage systems to serve as "Resiliency Hubs." During periods of grid outage, the solar plus energy storage system (with or without emergency generator), will provide a no-cost resiliency center for the surrounding Low and Moderate Income (LMI) residents. At a minimum, Resiliency Hubs provide emergency heating and cooling; refrigeration of temperature sensitive medications; plug power for charging of cell phone and computer batteries; ventilation and emergency lighting.

The program is designed to foster the development of Resiliency Hubs that can support Maryland Communities, with an emphasis on serving LMI residents. Resiliency services can greatly reduce stress to residents of the community during electricity outages and can provide the local government with an additional resource to meet the community's need for electricity during extended grid outages. This bill also helps to move our state toward locally sourcing electrification and broader carbon reduction goals to help diminish the impact of climate change.

AIA Maryland and its membership encourages steps to improve the quality of Maryland's built environment, especially those items which address the changing climate and the impacts it has on our communities. Therefore, AIA Maryland is happy to support the intent of this bill.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Nook, AIA
President, AIA Maryland