

21 January, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for SB 0081
Enforcement of Local Building Performance Laws
(Building Energy Performance Standards Act of 2022).

Dear Chairman Pinsky and members of the EHEA Committee:

I am writing to voice AIA Maryland's support of Senate Bill 0081. AIA Maryland represents nearly 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and advocates for the profession and the quality of the built environment. Senate Bill 0081 is important in that the bill enables Charter Counties to have an enforcement mechanism that demonstrates their commitment to achieving their adopted Energy Performance Standards and our need as a state to build and renovate buildings to be more energy efficient structures. Mechanisms like this help to drive decisions in the design and development process that will diminish the adverse impact of buildings on the natural environment.

Regulations without consequences for non-compliance are simply easy to forego only those who recognize the value of the regulations may comply. This legislation enables jurisdictions to make it clear that Energy Performance Standards are important, and it may be our only path toward collectively meeting or improving upon our energy reduction and carbon reduction goals for the state. Without the potential to enforce the standards, development decisions may be made to forego first costs to enable less efficient structures to be built and have higher operational costs and consumption for the foreseeable 50+ year anticipated life of a building. Additionally, charter counties are likely the highest concentration of development in the state thereby increasing the potential impact of such measures.

Maryland is not acting alone in adopting guidelines like these. Washington DC and many other jurisdictions have implemented performance standards. More than 100 major cities across the US have such standards in place. Enforcement is typically set at a level that would be higher than estimated improvement costs to create a strong disincentive for non-compliance. We encourage you to vote with our future in mind and cast your vote in favor of SB 0081 to enable Energy Performance Standards to be enforceable and have consequences for noncompliance in Charter Counties.

Sincerely,



Chris Parts, AIA
Director, Past President