



Local governments working together for a better metropolitan region

March 3, 2011

Honorable Dereck E. Davis, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 231
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

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Arlington County

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Fairfax County

Falls Church

Loudoun County

Manassas

Manassas Park

Prince William County

**Adjunct member*

RE: Support HB 829 Renewable Energy for All Act

Dear Chairman Davis:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), I am writing to urge you **to support HB 829**, which would establish a residential biomass heating system grant program. This legislation would allow assist Maryland residents, including low income residents, to use renewable energy to heat their homes through a sustainable funding stream.

In 2008 the COG Board of Directors adopted a National Capital Region Climate Change Report that set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) developed a Climate Action Plan establishing recommendations and performance measures to achieve the report's targets. HB 829, the Renewable Energy for All Act, supports the action plan measures: to encourage the purchase and generation of electricity from renewable resources in the metropolitan Washington region by the end of 2012.

The CEEPC Advocacy Subcommittee determined that this bill meets its criteria of: directly supporting a Climate Action Plan goal; reducing energy use and/or encouraging the use of alternative fuels; having no cost for state and local agencies or establishing a sustainable funding stream; and earning support from the Maryland Clean Energy Center, the Maryland Municipal League or the Maryland Association of Counties.

In our opinion, a "yes" vote on HB 829 helps Maryland make renewable energy affordable for more Maryland residents.

Thank you for giving this your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrea Harrison, Chair
COG Board of Directors

cc: Delegate Heather R. Mizeur (lead sponsor)