

## HB 829, Summary of Renewable Energy for All Act

Supporting materials prepared by the Alliance for Green Heat

[www.forgreenheat.org](http://www.forgreenheat.org)

February 2011

**Purpose:** to establish a renewable energy grant program in Maryland for residential wood and pellet heating units. Unlike the current renewable energy grant programs for solar, wind and geothermal, this program is designed mainly for low and middle-income families. Unlike those programs, which can provide very large grants mainly to wealthy families, this would provide a maximum grant of \$1,500 so that available funds can benefit many families. The program would establish the strictest emission limits on wood and pellet stoves in the United States.

### Benefits:

- Displaces expensive and carbon intensive heating fuels: oil, electricity and propane.
- Keeps heating dollars in the U.S. and often in Maryland.
- Provides jobs in rural communities.
- Provides energy independence and security.
- Provides more economic security for low-income families who would otherwise have to pay high-cost fossil fuel utility bills.
- Drives customers to the cleanest stoves and thus avoids the installation of hundreds of dirtier models.

**Grant amount:** 30 – 40% of purchase and installation price up to a maximum of \$1,500 per family. Installation by a certified installer required.

- 30% Household income > \$75,000
- 40% Household income < \$75,000
- Extra \$250 for the trade in of a non-certified EPA stove. The installer and/or stove retailer is responsible for handling trade-ins.

**Rationale:** This provides 1. larger grants for low-income families who most need it, 2. An incentive to choose the cleanest stoves on the market today, and 3. an additional incentive to get older, polluting stoves out of circulation instead of being sold on second hand market.

**Equipment eligibility:** Pellet stoves that emit less than 1.5 grams per hour and wood stoves that emit under 3.0 grams per hour.

**Rationale:** EPA currently allows up to 7.5 gr/hr for wood stoves and no upper limit for pellet stoves. The only other statewide limits are in Washington that allows up to 4.5 gr/hr and Oregon that allows up to 2.5 gr/hr for their tax incentive program. This would establish Maryland as a leader in promoting the cleanest stoves on the market today.

**Household eligibility:** For woodstoves, families whose primary heat is electricity, oil or propane; for pellet stoves, any household in the state.

Rationale: This would target 1. Families who have the most expensive heating systems, and 2. Rural families who do not live in densely inhabited areas and 3. Rural families who do not live in the air quality non-attainment zone that extends up and down the DC – Baltimore corridor .