

July 14, 2021

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: **SUPPORT:** Bill 16-21, Environmental Sustainability - Building Energy Use Benchmarking and Performance Standards

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I write in strong support of bill 16-21 and the positive outcomes it will herald for Montgomery County's economy and its property owners and residents.

BEPS is sound public policy. By properly incentivizing private sector action, we will drive sustainable, innovative, and data-driven investments in our buildings. BEPS will also deliver co-benefits for Montgomery County's economy,ⁱ its property owners,ⁱⁱ the health and productivity of its residents and workers,ⁱⁱⁱ and its efforts to address racial justice.^{iv}

Any serious effort to meet our climate crisis must focus on buildings as the nation's single largest consumer of energy.^v Thankfully, Montgomery County has an energized green business community and a highly climate-conscious community. We also have exceptional professional leadership and staff at our Department of Environmental Protection.

Together, we have another opportunity to be a national policy leader. Passage of bill 16-21 would make Montgomery County the first County in the US to enact building energy performance standards (BEPS) legislation.^{vi} Currently, there are statewide BEPS programs in place in Washington and Colorado and there are city-level programs in NYC, DC, and St. Louis. More and more jurisdictions have and are planning to propose similar legislation based on the clear public policy benefits realized in these jurisdictions, and the practical on-the-ground experience of helping building owners make cost-effective efficiency improvements will spur local innovation and will create high-paying green jobs at companies like PulseIQ.



PulseIQ proudly manufactures its smart thermostat product in Montgomery County and the majority of our clients are in Montgomery County. Our mission is to serve master-meter multifamily properties with reliable, impactful, and innovative energy efficiency solutions. Our data-centric building automation and controls products and services help clients reduce energy and maintenance costs, increase property values, and improve resident safety and satisfaction.

I am particularly heartened by Bill 16-21's inclusion of multifamily properties. Prior to joining PulseIQ, I spent a decade in property management, overseeing a large and diverse portfolio of common ownership community properties, predominantly in Montgomery County. During that time, I experienced first-hand how a lack of awareness, a lack of impetus to change, and a lack of resources led properties to underinvest in their physical infrastructure with profoundly negative consequences for their long-term physical and financial viability.

In every multifamily building I have set foot in, I have seen immediately achievable low-cost and no-cost opportunities to improve energy efficiency, many with significant potential to reduce electric, gas, and water consumption. Even in the most efficient buildings, there are *always* opportunities to do better.

There is potential in this history of failure. As former US Energy Secretary and Nobel Laureate, Dr. Stephen Chu once said, "Energy efficiency is not just low-hanging fruit; it is fruit that is lying on the ground." We know from the US EPA that the average building needlessly wastes 30% of the energy it consumes.^{vii} BEPS will encourage property owners to act in their own self-interest to solve this problem using proven, economically sound, and data-driven techniques to reduce this waste.

The best time to invest in energy efficiency was years ago. The second-best time is right now. I encourage you to seize this opportunity and pass bill 16-21.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam L. Landsman, CEM, AMS, CMCA
President



ⁱ <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/making-the-green-recovery-work-for-jobs-income-and-growth-a505f3e7/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.fastcompany.com/90565386/how-we-could-save-4-billion-in-building-energy-costs-without-any-renovations>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://cobe.forhealth.org/>

^{iv} <https://www.npr.org/2021/06/13/1004873139/tackling-energy-justice-requires-better-data-these-researchers-are-on-it>

^v <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=86&t=1>

^{vi} <https://www.imt.org/behind-the-scenes-montgomery-countys-journey-to-building-energy-performance-standards/>

^{vii} <https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/local-topics-energy-efficiency-non-governmental-buildings>

