



July 19, 2022

Councilmember Hans Riemer
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Re: Support for Bill 13-22
Buildings – Comprehensive Building Decarbonization

Dear Councilmember Riemer:

I am writing to voice AIA Potomac Valley's support for Bill 13-22. AIA Potomac Valley represents nearly 700 architects in the Potomac Valley region and advocates for the profession and the quality of the built environment. The majority of our members live and/or work within Montgomery County.

As architects, we work every day to design the future now, which includes addressing the changing climate. All-electric building standards would help bring the County closer to its goals of zero-greenhouse gas emissions by 2035. We agree this is absolutely necessary as the built environment plays a large and distinct role in energy consumption. In addition, there are multiple additional benefits that all-electric buildings provide, such as safety from gas-related explosions, and healthier air quality for the occupants.

We believe that the exemptions provided for areas where it is not yet feasible for 100% electric power are helpful at this time while technologies and battery systems are still being improved. We look forward to a future when there is no need for exemptions.

As this bill does not specify the all-electric standards, members of AIA Potomac Valley would like to be a part of the working groups put in place for developing these during the next building code adoption cycle, similarly to how our members were involved in the Building Energy Performance Standards stakeholder working groups. The ultimate goal of this bill would be more easily achieved with a more comprehensive building code to reduce the energy consumption of buildings as a whole.

AIA Potomac Valley and its membership strongly encourage steps to improve the quality of Maryland's built environment, especially those items which address the changing climate. Therefore, AIA Potomac Valley is happy to support the intent of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Verbeke".

Jennifer Verbeke, AIA
Past-President, AIA Potomac Valley