

To: Montgomery County Council  
From: Christopher Smith, Montgomery County Resident  
Date: June 13, 2022  
Re: Bill 13-22, Buildings – Comprehensive Building Decarbonization

Councilmembers,

I want to express my opposition to Bill 13-22, which effectively limits Montgomery County resident's energy choices, forcing consumers to purchase electricity or alternative energy sources. The audacity of the Council to propose such a bill without a comprehensive fact-based, cost analysis of the impact to consumers is unsurprising of this legislative body. Despite the fact it has experienced net outward migration since 2010, the county is facing a housing crisis. This is largely a result of the anti-competitive policies this county has put in place that discourage developers from constructing new housing. Developers do not green wash the cost of doing business, they make their decisions based on hard data.

In addition to the impact on housing, the county is ignoring the fact that most of the net electric generation is produced using natural gas. Will the impact of an all-electric grid create more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from electric power plants than the mixed-source options residents have today?

The council's obvious response to the question above is that renewable energy sources will replace the generation lost from natural gas production. Does the county understand the cost of a power purchase agreement or the price of solar panels? How does a legislative body even propose this legislation without addressing the impact to consumers in the face of record high inflation?

The county has failed to answer these questions and should be required to before making decisions like this.

I can tell the council first-hand of my experience of a solar PPA with Tesla that I inherited when I purchased my home. Within three months of moving in, my roof, which is 99% covered with solar panels, showed signs of a leak. Upon inspection of a qualified roofer, they determined that the leak was a result of improper panel installation. Because I have twin 16-month-old children and the possibility of black mold, I quickly had Tesla remove the panels and use a third party to install a new roof. I have had the panels off my home for the past year as I argue back and forth with Tesla to make assurances that when they reinstall the panels there will not be another leak. In the meantime, my electric bill has actual decreased because of the lower rate Pepco charges compared to the rate in the inherited PPA agreement. I would love to be able to make the change to natural gas, even as prices soar. This is yet another example of how the county is willing ignore consumer protections and green wash policies that allow solar installers to take advantage of consumers.