



Update EmPOWER Maryland to Help Maryland Meet Our Climate Goals by 2045

What is EmPOWER?

The EmPOWER Maryland Energy Efficiency Act of 2008 created the EmPOWER program to incentivize energy efficiency and conservation efforts. EmPOWER has improved energy efficiency, which has saved utility customers money, reduced pollution, and helped protect the environment.

Since 2008, EmPOWER has:

- Created lifetime savings of over \$12.7 billion from an investment of \$3.5 billion in efficiency.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of at least 9.6 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, equal to taking 2 million cars off the road for a year.
- Provided Marylanders with free or discounted energy audits, weatherization, and efficient appliances and provided businesses with discounts and incentives for energy efficient upgrades.

Did You Know?

- Maryland must substantially reduce GHG emissions from buildings to achieve its goal of reducing emissions by 60% by 2031 (from 2006 levels) and reaching net zero emissions by 2045. Burning fossil fuels in buildings generates up to 20% of Maryland's greenhouse gas pollution. The resulting indoor air pollution is also harmful and a major contributing cause of asthma and other illnesses.
- To reduce building emissions, Maryland must increase its capacity for generating clean electricity from wind and solar power and design state programs that support electrifying our buildings.
- Electric heat pumps not only avoid the GHG emissions from gas furnaces, they are three times as efficient as gas heat. As we continue to expand clean energy, electric heating and cooking become even more climate friendly.



Heat pump photo courtesy of US Dept of Energy



December 5th Action (Photo by David F. Choy)

Why do we need to update EmPOWER?

Transitioning Maryland households from gas to electric space heating and appliances is essential for achieving our state’s legislatively-enacted climate goals. EmPOWER Maryland, our longstanding energy efficiency program, needs to be updated to become an important tool for accomplishing this transition, with EmPOWER rebates supporting households switching to electric in order to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This session, we expect Chair Brian J. Feldman of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee and Vice-chair Brian M. Crosby of the House Economic Matters Committee to introduce an EmPOWER reform bill.

Our priorities for EmPOWER reform:

- Set pollution reduction targets and measure results based on greenhouse gas reductions, aligning the program with the state’s climate goals.
- Expand EmPOWER’s successful discounts and rebates for energy audits, weatherization and efficient appliances by adding new incentives for efficient, electric appliances and heating – enabling fuel switching from gas, propane, and oil to electric.
- Expand access for low-income households to state and federal funds for energy efficiency and whole-home retrofits by enabling fuel switching and hiring multilingual community outreach specialists.
- Delivers savings directly to Maryland households by encouraging utilities to invest in in-home improvements and requiring them to achieve 80% of goals from in-home savings.
- Increase transparency and accountability for utilities’ plans, costs, and profits.
- Stop spending ratepayer dollars on subsidies for polluting gas appliances and home heating.



December 5th Action (Photo by David F. Choy)

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