



July 27, 2026

Submitted via email to dli.regulations+BCA@maryland.gov

Mischelle F. VanReusel
Deputy Commissioner
Department of Labor
Division of Labor and Industry
Building Codes Administration
10946 Golden West Drive, Suite 160
Hunt Valley, MD 21031

Re: Public Comment in Support of Maryland Adoption of 2024 International Energy Conservation Code, with Critical Recommended Improvements

Dear Deputy Commissioner VanReusel,

On behalf of [Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships](#) (NEEP), we are pleased to submit the following comments in response to the request for public comment in the Notice of Proposed Action to Amend Regulations .02, .02-1, and .03 under COMAR 09.12.50 Model Performance Code; and .03 and .04 under ¹AR 09.12.51 Maryland Building Performance Standards.² NEEP is an independent, nonpartisan, non-profit organization that advances energy efficiency in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic to improve energy affordability, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower air pollution, and promote economic development.

Support for Adoption of the 2024 IECC

NEEP applauds the State of Maryland for proposing to adopt the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), continuing its longstanding leadership in advancing high-performance building energy codes. Adoption of the 2024 IECC will provide significant benefits to Maryland residents and businesses

² These comments are offered by NEEP Staff and do not necessarily represent the view of NEEP Board of Directors, sponsors, or partners. NEEP is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.



through lower energy costs, improved building performance, enhanced grid resilience, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, while supporting the State's climate and energy goals.

The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation (CMEI), formerly known as the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, reports that the 2024 IECC reduces site energy use intensity of residential buildings by 7.43% and 7.31% in Climate Zones (CZ) 4 and 5, respectively, relative to the 2021 IECC.³ Moreover, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) calculates immediate net savings from the residential provisions of the 2024 IECC compared to the 2021 IECC (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Cost effectiveness of the 2024 IECC⁴

	Life-cycle cost savings (\$/dwelling unit)	Net Annual Cash Flow Savings (\$ for Year 1)
Climate Zone 4	3,790	192
Climate Zone 5	2,496	154

These savings will provide homeowners and renters in code-compliant homes with important protection; since 2010, Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) electricity delivery costs have risen over twice the rate of inflation, and gas delivery costs have risen over three times the rate of inflation.⁵

Critical Recommended Improvements to the Proposed Code

The Maryland legislature recently enacted the Utility RELIEF Act, which lowers near-term energy efficiency targets for utilities and risks lowering customers' access to energy efficiency services. This emphasizes the need for Maryland to lean into the opportunity provided by modern building energy codes to lower energy bills and help Maryland lower emissions to meet the state climate goals and ensure that new housing is built to higher efficiency standards. With the state needing approximately 590,000 new housing units by 2045 to accommodate projected growth, adopting stronger building energy codes can help meet housing demand while ensuring lower energy costs and lower emissions for decades.⁶ We offer several recommendations to ensure that the next code adoption maximizes this

³ https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2024-12/2024_IECC_Determination_TSD.pdf

⁴ https://www.pnnl.gov/main/publications/external/technical_reports/PNNL-35986.pdf

⁵ <https://opc.maryland.gov/Why-is-my-2026-summer-BGE-bill-so-high>

⁶ <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/ClimateChange/Maryland%20Climate%20Reduction%20Plan/Maryland%27s%20Climate%20Pollution%20Reduction%20Plan%20-%20Final%20-%20Dec%2028%202023.pdf>

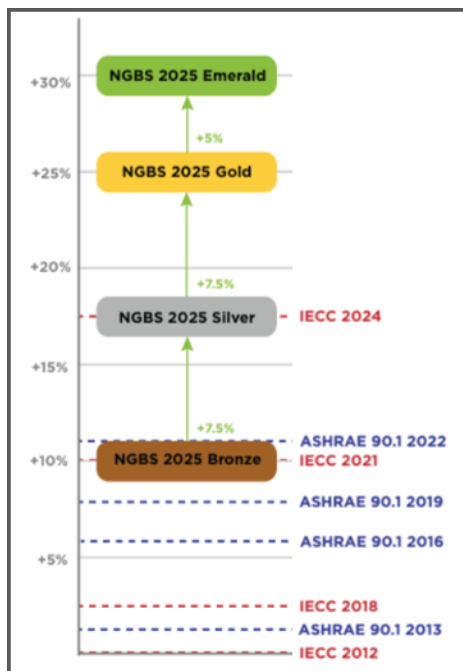


opportunity by enhancing energy affordability through energy conservation, and providing additional resources that support a more reliable and resilient regional electric grid in alignment with Maryland's policy objectives:

Recommendation #1: Amend the above code program to provide a compliance path with enhanced energy efficiency beyond the model code

In the 2024 IECC, R104.1.1 Above code programs states that the “authority having jurisdiction shall be permitted to deem a national, state, or local energy-efficiency program to exceed the energy efficiency required by this code.” The proposed code amends R104.1.1 to allow compliance with the current version of the Silver Rating of the ICC 700 National Green Building Standard (NGBS). However, as illustrated in Figure 1, the National Homebuilders report that the energy efficiency of the current version of the Silver Rating ICC-700 NGBS, 2025, is already equivalent to the 2024 IECC. This does not meet the intent of an “above” code program. The lack of a more stringent option is a missed opportunity to provide guidance to leading builders on how to meet enhanced standards now and to signal the building industry on how to prepare for upcoming code cycles. NEEP recommends that R104.1.1 should be amended instead to compliance with the Gold Rating of the 2025 ICC-700 NGBS, with 7.5% improved energy efficiency above the 2024 IECC, as a true “above” code program.

Figure 1. NGBS Energy Efficiency Comparison.⁷



⁷ Modified from: <https://www.ngbs.com/documents/NGBS%20Energy%20Efficiency%20Comparison.pdf>



Recommendation #2: Include amendments developed and approved through the 2027 IECC process to further strengthen energy conservation in both residential and commercial energy codes

The 2027 IECC is nearly finalized, with an expected release in December 2026. The changes in the 2027 IECC reflect stakeholder vetted enhancements in energy efficiency. NEEP recommends that Maryland amend the proposed code to incorporate the following provisions from the 2027 IECC to maximize this opportunity to introduce impactful, market ready advancements in energy conservation in new construction statewide, and minimize changes in the next code cycle:

- The 2024 IECC lists ductwork located inside conditioned space as an optional additional energy efficiency credit in Table R408.2 for the prescriptive path, increasing site energy savings by 6-7% in CZ 4 and 9% in CZ 5. The 2027 IECC makes this optional credit a mandatory requirement in R403.3.3. Duct System Location. As an impactful and low-cost amendment, NEEP recommends amending the proposed code to include the 2027 IECC R403.3.3. Duct System Location as a mandatory requirement.
- The 2027 IECC C403.8 Fans and fan controls is amended from the 2024 IECC to increase the stringency of allowed fan system electrical input power on average by 10% for fans with input power >1kW. These metrics were unchanged from the 2021 IECC to the 2024 IECC. The proposed changes to Section C403.8 in the 2027 IECC were determined to be cost-effective under ASHRAE's economic analysis.⁸ Specifically, the incremental cost of improved fan performance falls below ASHRAE's cost-effectiveness threshold (the "scalar limit"), which is based on annual energy cost savings and the expected 15-year service life of the equipment. Accordingly, NEEP recommends amending the proposed code to incorporate these market-ready, cost-effective provisions.

Recommendation #3: Retain mandatory credits for renewable energy and load management and reverse weakening of energy efficiency credits in the commercial prescriptive path

The proposed code removes the requirement for separate credits for renewable energy and load management in the 2024 IECC Commercial Provisions. Instead, the proposed code adds the renewable energy and load managements credit options in Table 406.1.2 to the energy efficiency credit options in Table 406.1.1 without increasing the total number of energy efficiency credits required for commercial buildings following the prescriptive path. These amendments curb the ability of commercial building owners to control their energy costs by weakening the energy efficiency requirements and limiting load management requirements, potentially constraining Maryland business profitability and growth. Moreover, with the regional grid operator projecting 32 GW of peak load growth between 2024 and



2030, these amendments limit a critical opportunity to reduce the contribution of new construction to that growth through stronger energy efficiency and demand management measures.⁹

We recommend revising the proposed code to re-establish C406.1.2 as separate credit requirements for Renewable and Load Management, and to retain the limit to surplus renewable and load management credit allowed to reduce energy efficiency credits described in C406.1.1 Exception 2 to avoid weakening C406.1.1 additional energy efficiency requirements.

The proposed code also removes C405.15 renewable energy requirements, which eliminates the backstop of renewable energy to achieve Credit R01 under C406.3 Renewable and load management. We understand the Maryland Building Code Administration has stated its intent to avoid minimum renewable energy requirements. Therefore, we provide the recommendation above to re-establish C406.1.2 as separate credit requirements without replacing C405.15 as an intermediate option to retain the energy efficiency provided by C406.1.1 and require some amount of load management.

NEEP applauds the Building Codes Administration for moving forward with adoption of the 2024 IECC. However, critical improvements are needed to improve energy affordability. With these changes, Maryland's residents and businesses stand to benefit from energy savings and emissions reductions congruent with Maryland's climate goals by the adoption of the 2024 IECC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Charlotte Weigel', is shown within a light gray rectangular border.

Charlotte Weigel, Manager, Codes and Standards

Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP)

⁹ <https://insidelines.pjm.com/pjm-kicks-off-initiative-to-balance-reliability-with-large-load-growth/>

