These changes to EmPOWER will support the Maryland Commission on Climate Change’s goal to “Develop a Clean Heat Retrofit Program to retrofit 100% of low-income homes by 2030.”

EmPOWER is an energy efficiency program administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development and Maryland’s energy utilities, providing financial incentives to perform energy audits and weatherization services for consumers.

Limited income households are eligible to receive energy efficiency upgrades at no charge. Energy efficiency is one of the most cost effective ways to reduce electricity demand, and help achieve our climate goals while lowering bills for consumers.

THE ENERGY SAVINGS ACT WILL

- Stop incentives for fossil fuel appliances and heating and create new incentives for electrification, efficient electric appliances, and home heating.
- Build on the successful EmPOWER rebates and resources for energy audits and weatherization.
- Require the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to contract with multilingual community outreach specialists to coordinate benefits from EmPOWER, as well as federal programs, for low-income customers.
- Reach more Marylanders by expanding the network of contractors. Provide ongoing education, outreach, training, and certification for contractors to deliver services and ensure Marylanders see the most benefits.
- Deliver the majority of savings directly to Maryland households to help lower utility bills by ensuring 85% of energy savings happen in the home (as opposed to being used by utilities to upgrade transmission lines), where ratepayers benefit most.

This program has provided a lifetime savings of over $12.7 billion from an investment of $3.5 billion in efficiency and 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.

The Climate Solutions Now Act directed EmPOWER to be updated to adjust the way it is evaluated to align with the state’s greenhouse gas reductions goals of 60% by 2031 and net-zero emissions by 2045.