

STAFF REPORT ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL FOR 2023
GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

This report describes a legislative initiative to authorize energy benchmarking for large commercial buildings that the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC) proposes be included in the county's legislative program for the 2023 Virginia General Assembly session. This proposal advances the goals of both the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) and the Operational Energy Strategy.

Energy benchmarking and disclosure (“benchmarking”) for large buildings is a proven technique for reducing building energy use. Benchmarking provides factual, actionable information that building owners and managers can use to make cost-effective improvements in facilities. According to the Institute for Market Transformation, energy benchmarking requirements are now in place in over 40 communities nationwide, including the states of California and Maryland and cities such as Atlanta, Chicago, New York City and Miami.

At present, localities in Virginia lack the authority to enact energy benchmarking requirements for buildings. OEEC proposes an amendment to Title 15.2, *Counties, Cities and Towns*, to add a section to Article 5 of Chapter 9 that would authorize localities to require energy benchmarking and disclosure, subject to statewide guidelines from Virginia Department of Energy. While this type of legislation has been introduced in various forms, unsuccessfully, over the past several GA sessions, benchmarking has support from a range of advocates who continue to seek the authority for localities in Virginia. Information gleaned from energy benchmarking would be instrumental in the county's efforts to encourage and incentivize the private sector to reinvest in its buildings for greater energy efficiency.

Please contact Kambiz Agazi at 703-324-1788 or via email at Kambiz.Agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov with any questions.