

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

(First report to the Board, February 14, 2008)

Maryland General Assembly

Chesapeake Bay:

- **SB 213**, distribution of the Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund; ***Adopted but with only \$25 million, instead of the proposed \$50 million.***

Climate Change Energy:

- **HB 374- SB 205**, establishing a state goal to reduce electricity consumption by 15% by 2015; ***Both adopted as amended.***
- **HB 368 – SB 268**, authorizes a new Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Program to support energy efficiency; ***No action taken on HB 368, SB 268 reported unfavorably.***
- **HB 375 – SB 209**; strengthens the State's renewable portfolio standards by 20%; ***both adopted as amended.***
- **HB 377 – SB 207**; providing grants and tax exemptions for geothermal and solar initiatives; ***HB 377 adopted as amended, no action on SB 207.***

Green Building:

- **HB 23**, calling for the development of green building standards and a cost benefit analysis; ***Withdrawn.***

Housing:

- **HB 74**, establishing the Maryland Affordable Housing Investment Fund; ***Adopted.***
- **HB 38**, establishing a housing program for first responders and teachers; ***No action.***
- **HB 231**, establishing rental assistance program; ***Adopted.***
- **HB 512**, establishing the Maryland Affordable Housing Investment Fund; ***Referred to interim study.***
- **SB 281**, authorizing counties to support/foster affordable housing programs for low-moderate income families; ***Both adopted as amended.***

BRAC

- **SB 206**, Authorizing the creation of BRAC Revitalization and Incentive Zones in the State; ***Adopted.***

*Unless noted, amendments made did not change the intent/nature of the legislation.

Virginia

The Virginia State Corporation Commission on March 31st approved Dominion Virginia Power's plan to build a coal-burning power plant in Wise County, Virginia. The Commission has designated the plant as a "conventional coal facility" instead of one that is "carbon capture compatible," further supporting claims from environmentalists and other stakeholders that the plant would increase greenhouse gas emissions. Proponents argue that the "Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center" would be one of the cleanest coal-fired facilities in the nation because it would have a sophisticated emissions-control system. The plant must still be approved by the Virginia Air Pollution Control Board.