

Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition



March 2, 2009

Economic Matters Committee
House of Delegates
Maryland General Assembly
House Office Building, Room 231
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: House Bill 1238: Maryland Energy Administration – Standards for Televisions

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

The Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition (CERC) is a public policy organization consisting of the major retailers of consumer electronics products and the leading industry trade associations.

CERC members have combined to focus our unique and expert market perspective on the critical policy issues facing the consumer electronic retail industry and our customers. CERC's individual members operate in all 50 states, U.S. territories and worldwide, employing well over two million people.

Energy Efficiency is an important issue CERC members have focused in on in its on-going efforts to help educate and work with customers, legislators, and regulators. CERC would like to respectfully express its deep concern and opposition towards the Energy Efficiency standards as laid out in House Bill 1238. We feel that these standards which propose to ban the sale of certain televisions in Maryland based on the California Energy Commission (CEC) model would have a detrimental affect on consumers that purchase new televisions in Maryland.

Consumer electronics retailers in Maryland are working very hard to provide consumers with energy efficient choices for all their consumer electronic and appliance needs. The participation in the US Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program has been a tremendous success. The standards as laid out in House Bill 1238 are not only unnecessary but will have the effect of driving consumers to neighboring states and the District of Columbia to purchase less expensive or alternative brands. As retailers, our members seek to meet the needs of our customers. With nearby out-of-state markets and on-line choices, consumers can generally find the video product they want to fit their individual needs. If high-end video consumers can not find the models they seek in

Maryland, they will go elsewhere. This will potentially deprive the state of Maryland of the energy efficiencies they seek to capture and also the jobs and tax revenue the State needs particularly in these harsh economic times.

Since the Maryland Energy Administration would essentially use the Standards for Televisions being proposed by the CEC; I have a joint letter* CERC recently submitted with the California Retailers Association (CRA) raising consumer and economic concerns about their proposed standards. The same would be true in Maryland if the State adopted the California approach to ban the sale of certain video devices.

I would ask that you review this attached letter to the CEC and give close consideration to the negative impacts of House Bill 1238. I would respectfully urge that House Bill 1238 not be passed out of the Economic Matters Committee favorably.

If we can be of any assistance in this matter, please to do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

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*Attachment: CERC - CRA letter to the California Energy Commission