



HB1039 – Property Tax - Community Solar Energy Generating Systems - Agrivoltaics

Testimony before

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

March 29, 2022

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Richard Deutschmann, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB1039**, to provide a tax credit for certain community solar projects in the state. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Luedtke for sponsoring this important legislation.

Community Solar has been a very successful program here in Maryland, as it has been in numerous states across the country. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, there are now more than 3,600MW of Community Solar projects operating in the United States, as of 3Q21. It fills a gap for subscribers to be able to utilize the benefits of solar energy, even if they cannot use onsite solar because of lack of home ownership, economic status, or configuration issues such as shaded property. Community Solar helps the state to realize its goal of bringing 1000's of MW of clean energy online, as we reduce our use of fossil fuels to lower greenhouse gas emissions. Finally, Community Solar has the potential to reach 1000's of low to moderate income (LMI) subscribers, with savings on energy bills that will help those who need it most.

Community Solar projects on agricultural land hold great potential for multiple uses. Ground mounted solar projects can now be built in such a way to grow crops (or graze animals) in the spaces between or below the arrays. And Community Solar can also be built on rooftop, parking lot, or brownfield locations, with the benefits of putting generation near the electric loads, while reducing the use of greenfield and ag lands. But these methods are more costly to build. So, this tax credit will encourage this type of development, with many benefits to the state and the community.

For these reasons, we support the goals of HB1039, as critical in building a strong Community Solar market in Maryland. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.

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