



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

House Bill 908

Date: February 23, 2023

To: House Economic Matters Committee

Position: Support

From: Doug Myers

Maryland Senior Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 908 which makes the Community Solar Pilot Program permanent, improves the program's eligibility for low and moderate income residents and seeks to protect high priority forest resources within the state.

The Community Solar Program will continue to ensure Maryland reaches the renewable energy goals set forth by the Clean Energy Jobs Act and Governor Moore's commitments to reach 100% renewable energy by 2035. We look forward to provisions of this bill to address loss of forests which have significant water quality functions as well as providing cooling shade and biodiversity.

Through clarified co-location requirements, HB908 incentivizes increased production of community solar projects on preferred sites such as rooftops, industrial zones, brownfields, parking lots, transportation rights-of-way and airports, as well as farmland where agri-voltaics are appropriate. These projects are more expensive to build, and so are made more possible through the economies of scale offered by the larger co-located projects. HB908 also incorporates information on the forest and tree canopy impacted into the application process (modeling New Jersey's laws to this effect), and makes this information publicly available so that the program can be adaptively managed in the future.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 908.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.