



Committee: Economic Matters
Testimony on: HB0908 – Electricity - Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program
Organization: Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 23, 2022

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

We are testifying today to strongly urge you to vote favorably for HB908. The Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee is a grassroots organization focused on State and County level climate action.

In March 2020, the City of Takoma Park passed the Climate Emergency Response Framework Resolution, which outlines strategies to achieve net zero emissions city-wide by 2035. One of the priority strategies identified in the Resolution was to accelerate the transition to 100% renewable energy. Takoma Park is a city of 50% homeowners and 50% renters. Many households are unable to have rooftop solar due to shade from our wonderful large trees, or because they live in an apartment, condo, or rent their home. The Community Solar Program is one important solution. Community solar can provide home-owners, renters, and businesses access to the environmental and price benefits of solar energy.

HB908 will make the Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Pilot Program permanent rather than letting it sunset in 2024. The bill places a greater focus on expanding community solar access to low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents by requiring at least 40% of the kilowatt-hour output be for LMI subscribers and by requiring utility consolidated billing, which places all energy charges in one utility bill.

HB908 also strengthens the Community Solar Program in important ways. It will allow energy assistance households to become community solar subscribers and apply their energy assistance benefits to all of their electricity charges through consolidated billing. The bill will provide certainty to solar businesses and support the State's solar workforce, while helping Takoma Park move closer to its 100% renewable target.

For these reasons, we strongly urge a **FAVORABLE** report for HB908 in committee.