



**Testimony in Support HB908
Electricity - Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program
House Economic Matters Committee
2/23/2023**

**Quentin Scott, Federal Director
Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund**

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, I urge a favorable report for HB908.

In 2015, the General Assembly first passed HB1087, making Maryland a ground breaker in Community Solar. Now, almost half of the states and District of Columbia, have permanent laws that support community solar. If the community solar program sunsets in 2024, Maryland risks falling behind after starting as a leader just a few short years ago. HB908 ensures that Maryland remains a leader by making community solar an essential part of our clean energy economy and locks in key provisions so the permanent program is accessible to all Marylanders.

An estimated 75 percent of Maryland households can't have solar panels on their own roof. These Marylanders live in an apartment or condo, or they rent and don't own the roof. Community Solar is essential to creating access to low-cost locally generated solar energy. To deploy community solar is a simple concept, relatively small solar projects are built, and households then purchase low-cost electricity from them, expanding solar capacity to benefit the entire community. At least 20 states allow households unable to have solar on their own roof to participate in community solar programs.

Community Solar will lower energy costs for low and moderate income households. From the community solar pilot program, for most households who signed up for Community Solar, their costs are 5-10% below the utility's standard electricity service. LMI households save even more. LMI customers could receive discounts between 20% and 25% below utility standard cost for electricity. Community Solar allows LMI households to participate in the transition to clean renewable energy and reduces a large share of their income that they have to pay for energy. This legislation requires all Community Solar projects going forward to include at least 40% of their subscribers in the LMI category, which is consistent with President Biden's "Justice 40" commitment.

If this bill passes, Maryland will continue to be a leader in community solar projects, creating clean, affordable, reliable electricity that all Marylanders will have access to.

We urge a favorable report.



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