



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

SB 613

DATE: February 28, 2023

SPONSOR: Senator Brooks

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Garrett Fitzgerald (garrett.fitzgerald@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support

Electricity – Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program

Solar energy is a clean, renewable, domestic resource poised to play a critical role in powering our economy, creating jobs in Maryland, improving public health, and achieving our climate goals. Community solar projects offer a unique pathway to develop more solar in Maryland, and to enable more residents to support solar, even where adding it to their own properties is not feasible.

The existing community solar pilot program administered by the Public Service Commission has supported the development of new projects, including here in Montgomery County where we have constructed one of the largest community solar projects in the country to serve low-to-moderate income households with discounted electric bills. Unfortunately, the pilot program is scheduled to sunset at the end of 2024, at best creating a level of uncertainty that will stall the development of new community solar projects which can take years to plan and install.

This bill will improve Maryland's community solar program and make it permanent. It will also improve the program by: removing annual, utility-specific, and certain project size caps; ensuring that more community solar output will benefit low-to-moderate income families; and allowing subscribers to participate in consolidated billing, which is critically important for families receiving energy assistance.

We respectfully request that the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 613.