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**SB613 Electricity – Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program**  
**FAVORABLE**  
**Education, Energy and Environment Committee**  
**February 28, 2023**

Good afternoon, Chair Feldman, and members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee. I am Laurel Peltier, a member of and lead advocate for AARP Maryland. AARP is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization representing the interests of Americans aged 50 and older and their families. Key priorities of our organization include helping all Marylanders achieve financial and health security and supporting safety net for seniors and low-income households in the state of Maryland is a priority.

AARP MD and its almost 870,000 members support SB613 Electricity – Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program. We thank Senator Brooks for sponsoring this critical piece of legislation.

SB 613 will make the current Community Solar Pilot Program permanent. Currently the Pilot will sunset October of 2023. Today the program is designed to provide low income and moderately income households a chance to use community solar as an energy alternative.

SB 613 also provides the customer consolidated billing, altering the siting and sizing of solar generation projects and authorizing a subscriber coordinator to act on behalf of the subscriber organization.

AARP Maryland believes the following principles build upon and should apply to all products and services, including utilities.

- **Ensure service affordability for all**—utility rates should be based on prudent use of ratepayer money. Costs and savings should be distributed fairly among consumers. Households with lower incomes must be considered.
- **Secure and expand service access for all**—all consumers should have access to utility services regardless of factors such as geography, race, ethnicity, ability level, and income.
- **Improve quality**—consumers should be able to rely on high-quality utility services.
- **Enhance accountability**—any changes in utility service, policy, or rates should be open and transparent. The process should provide a wide range of opportunities for input from the public and independent groups.



We believe if passed, SB 613 Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program has the potential to reduce the energy burden for low to moderate income families and especially for those over 50. We respectfully ask the Education, Energy and Environment Committee for a favorable report. If you have questions or comments, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.