



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 258

DATE: February 20, 2024

SPONSOR: Delegate Qi

ASSIGNED TO: Economic Matters Committee

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

POSITION: Favorable (Department of Environmental Protection)

Renewable Energy - Customer-Sited Solar Program

This legislation would create new incentives to support more equitable development of solar projects throughout Maryland.

This bill would establish a Customer-Sited Solar Program within the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to provide grants for the installation new solar projects. Funding amounts are up to \$4,000 per project, increasing to \$5,000 for projects constructed in low-to-moderate (LMI) income census tracts, overburdened or underserved communities, and further increasing to up to \$7,500 for low-to-moderate income generators.

Grant funds for projects serving LMI communities would come from the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund which receives revenue from alternative compliance payments required by utilities for any shortfall in compliance with obligations under the Renewable Portfolio Standard. The proposed grant program aligns well with the current intended use of those funds. Grant funds for non-LMI projects would be secured from allowances under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

The bill also allows MEA discretion to use a portion of the funds to support home repairs necessary to enable the installation of a solar project. This is a major barrier to solar installation in many LMI properties and will help to enable a more equitable use of these funds.

We respectfully request that the Economic Matters Committee issue a favorable report on House Bill 258.