



TESTIMONY FOR HB0258 Renewable Energy – Customer-Sited Solar Program

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Qi

Committee: Economic Matters

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0258 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

Maryland is behind on meeting its solar energy targets and as a result has paid a record \$78 in alternative compliance payments to the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) in FY 2022. Maryland needs an estimated 600 megawatts of additional solar power each year to achieve the 2030 target, however just over 200 megawatts each year is currently projected to be built. Access to solar systems by low to moderate income (LMI) households is particularly challenging and yet so necessary.

This bill, if enacted, will establish a Customer-Sited Solar Program within the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to provide grants to eligible customers to increase deployment of solar energy systems (with or without energy storage).

Specifically, the Program will provide grants of varying amounts to: 1) an income-verified eligible LMI customer, 2) a non-income-verified eligible customer located in a LMI community, an overburdened community, or an underserved community, and 3) a non-income-verified eligible customer located outside a LMI community, overburdened community, or underserved community. MEA must publish mapping tools so people can determine whether they are located within a LMI community, overburdened community, or underserved community.

Our members understand the need to encourage deployment of additional solar sites, particularly in overburdened and underserved communities.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.