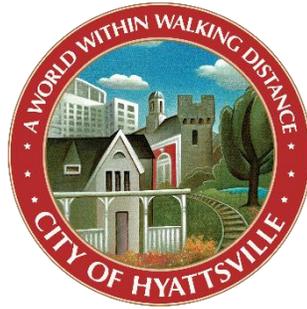


Candace B. Hollingsworth
Mayor



Tracey E. Douglas
City Administrator

February 19, 2020

Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chairman
Education, Health and
Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Chairman
House Economic Matters
House Office Building, Room 231
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: MD SB835 / HB1034 County and Municipal Street Lighting Investment Act

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Chairman Davis:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Hyattsville to state our support for Senate Bill 835 and House Bill 1034, the County and Municipal Street Lighting Investment Act.

The City of Hyattsville supports HB 1034/ SB 835 which authorizes a local government, subject to specified requirements, to (1) convert its street lighting service to an alternative-energy-only tariff established under the bill; (2) submit a request to acquire the street lighting equipment, as defined, from the electric company at some or all locations within the county or municipality; and (3) enter into an agreement to purchase electricity for the use of the street lighting equipment from any available electricity supplier. If the county or municipality and the electric company fail to agree to the purchase price or conditions of purchase of the street lighting equipment, the county or municipality may acquire the equipment by condemnation, subject to specified requirements.

Since legislation was first enacted in 2007 to permit local government purchase of street lighting equipment from private entities, discussions between municipalities and power companies have proved fruitless in finding agreement on the fair market value of street lighting equipment.

The City of Hyattsville has experienced this firsthand when it embarked on a multi-year initiative to improve safety and security throughout the City. Providing sufficient and effective lighting on City streets, walkways, and parks contributes to that overall goal. In March 2015, the City completed a comprehensive Lighting and Pedestrian Safety study which indicated

deficiencies in the amount of lighting, quality of lighting, and the amount of coverage provided. The study recommended as an initial course of action, retrofitting existing lighting fixtures to LED to improve overall lighting conditions, luminance, and illumination levels.

Staff proceeded to work with PEPCO - the only provider option, to determine the requirements for LED lighting replacements and the associated costs for installing new poles and retrofitting existing lights with LED fixtures. Over the course of five years, the City has expended approximately \$500,000 on this initiative. The process of working with PEPCO has been fraught with delays, demands for payment up front, and a complete lack of ability to negotiate for a fair market price on the lighting. The City, in its desire to ensure a safe environment for its residents, has effectively been held hostage by PEPCO's process and its pricing structure.

The City hopes that the articulation in law of considerations that may be considered in determining fair market value of street light equipment will provide an equitable means of breaking the stalemate that has persisted in this area and set forth a process by which municipalities will be able to purchase and maintain streetlights.

As HB 1034/SB 835 will help municipalities address these ongoing issues, the City of Hyattsville supports this bill and asks this committee to provide the bill with a favorable report. By supporting this bill, you honor the state's commitment to support Maryland communities. The current legislation advocates for local governments and helps provide much needed resources for improving the civic infrastructure upon which our communities depend.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and ask for your respective Committee's approval of Senate Bill 835 and House Bill 1034.

Sincerely,



Candace B. Hollingsworth
Mayor

cc: Maryland Delegation, District 22
Maryland Delegation, District 47A