



**Emily Scarr, Maryland PIRG Director**

**Economic Matters Committee**

**HB768: Montgomery County - Community Choice Energy - Pilot Program MC 17-21**

**February 18, 2021**

## **FAVORABLE**

*Maryland PIRG is a statewide, non-partisan, non-profit, citizen-funded public interest advocacy organization with grassroots members across the state. For forty years we've stood up to powerful interests whenever they threaten our health and safety, our financial security, or our right to fully participate in our democratic society.*

This bill enables Montgomery County to set up a pilot program for an alternative to the investor-owned energy supply system in Maryland. Community Choice Energy, as enabled by HB768, allows residents in a community to control the type of electricity purchased by their local utility. CCE's can enable communities to negotiate lower rates and use more renewable energy.

Marylanders pay high electric bills, suffer from unfair pricing mechanisms that gouge consumers without offering benefits, and our electric grid is strained to the point where we could be facing brown-outs in the coming years.

There is a better way. By adopting consumer oriented rules to govern our electric system, making smart investments in energy efficiency and clean local sources of energy, decision-makers can lower bills, create local clean energy jobs, reduce our dependence on expensive and unsafe sources of energy, and improve the reliability of our electric grid.

**We thank the Montgomery County Delegation for introducing this bill and urge a favorable report.**

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