



Mayor and Council of Rockville

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HB 768: MONTGOMERY COUNTY – COMMUNITY CHOICE ENERGY – PILOT PROGRAM MC 17-21

SUPPORT

The Rockville Mayor and Council are thankful to Chair Kelley and members of the Senate Finance Committee for the opportunity to comment on HB 768: Montgomery County – Community Choice Energy – Pilot Program MC 17-21. The Mayor and Council support HB 768. The City, with its population of over 68,000, strongly supports increasing its residents' and small businesses' access to clean and renewable sources of energy and competitive electricity rates. We are also committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other hazardous air and water pollution and support State efforts that demonstrate climate and energy leadership.

Currently, Maryland communities are not permitted by law to purchase electricity in aggregate for members of the community. Typically, utilities are responsible for purchasing and distributing power, grid maintenance, and customer service. This legislation allows Montgomery County and the local governments to pilot a tool to increase the availability of clean, renewable electricity in a cost-effective manner. This bill authorizes Montgomery County to create a community choice aggregation (CCA) program under which it may negotiate the purchase of electricity, or generate electricity, for its residential and small commercial electric customers. CCA customers continue to receive the same delivery and maintenance services from their local utility. By allowing governments to aggregate demand, communities have better standing to negotiate better rates with competitive suppliers and choose greener power sources to work towards their community greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

HB 768 supports local and state climate and energy goals, and we urge the Committee to provide this legislation with a favorable report. We thank the Committee for considering Rockville's comments as the Committee deliberates the merits of this legislation.