



Committee: Finance

Testimony on: HB0768 – Montgomery County – Community Choice Energy – Pilot Program

Organization: WISE

Submitting: Monica O'Connor

Position: Favorable

Date: March 23, 2021

Dear Madame Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

WISE seeks a favorable vote for HB0768 – Montgomery County-Community Choice Energy-Pilot Program.

We are a group of over 500 women in Anne Arundel County. We are seeing our children's future jeopardized by the crisis unfolding before us. The science of climate change is clear – as is our lived experience. Rising waters in the County, sunny day flooding, high temperature in the summer and erratic weather is now commonplace. We believe the science and anticipate that our elected officials will act with the necessary urgency this moment calls for. Every tool at our disposal needs to be implemented with urgency if we are to compete with the unfolding crisis.

Community Choice Energy is an excellent tool to allow communities to quickly increase renewable clean energy to their grid. It allows local governments to purchase electricity as a group on behalf of residents, businesses, and municipal accounts. The benefit of CCE is it allows communities to take control of their electricity purchases, enjoy competitive rates, and promote a more rapid transition to renewable energy. Customers are automatically enrolled in the group electricity purchase, but any customer can opt-out and choose a different electricity provider or rate. The utility continues to deliver power, maintain the grid, provide consolidated billing and other customer services.

Today 9 states have CCE, but not Maryland. By law, Maryland communities are not permitted to group purchase electricity. The Montgomery Community Choice Energy Pilot Program would be the first of its kind in Maryland, allowing Montgomery to reach its energy democracy goals while giving other counties an opportunity to observe its

advantages and potential pit falls. It is our hope, that the Senate will vote favorably on HB 0768 for Montgomery County and the State at large.