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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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Testimony in Support of HB954 - Property Tax - Solar Energy Systems

This bill creates a statewide personal property tax exemption for community solar projects installed on rooftops. As the State of Maryland continues its commitment to prioritizing renewable energy, creating this exemption will be critical to further the impact of these projects.

I am proud that Maryland has the most aggressive solar mandate in the country, and needs to reach 14.5 percent solar electricity by 2028. That means we need to figure out how to make solar development easier across the entire state.

It is not enough for large solar arrays to be built out in open land. There needs to be more solar development in dense, urban areas that serve the people in those communities.

HB 954 will lower the local tax burden for community solar that is constructed on the existing built environment, such as on building roofs and over parking lots. The existing personal property tax exemption for net metered solar would be extended to these systems. My goal is that hosting community solar, by leasing rooftop or parking lot space, can become a viable supplemental revenue source for local businesses, non-profits, and government entities.

The Governor's Task Force on Renewable Energy Development and Siting strongly supported lowering barriers to developing solar on the built environment. My bill is consistent with the task force's recommendations. Community solar can be a big part of Maryland's fight against climate change, and it can benefit all of Maryland's communities at the same time.

For these reasons, I ask for a favorable report on HB954.