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Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Education, Business and Administration

Chair, Pensions

Senate Chair

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 25, 2022

Testimony in Favor of SB 264
Community Solar Systems - Exemption - Energy and Property Taxes

Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and fellow members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 264. If passed, the bill will advance community solar projects that provide a benefit to low-to-moderate income (LMI) customers, and in doing so encourage solar generation in communities that are overburdened by environmental pollutants and have unequal access to cheaper, renewable energy sources.

Maryland's community solar program has been an essential part of our State's drive to expand our renewable energy portfolio to meet the goals the legislature has set previously; but it is currently not financially viable to develop smaller rooftop and parking canopy community solar projects for LMI benefit. This legislation will do just that by providing critical financial incentives to leverage these projects.

SB264 incentivizes these by projects by requiring an exemption from County/Municipal property tax for community solar projects that reserve more than 50% of their power for the benefit of LMI households and which are installed on rooftops, parking lots, or brownfields.

After conversations with both the advocates and MACO, I will be offering an amendment to ensure that these incentives make the most sense and that we have appropriate monitoring to keep the program as targeted as possible. The amendment will:

1. Strike energy consumption language;
2. Create a 5 year sunset on the exemption; and,
3. Require reporting on the use of the exemption.

This targeted approach to community solar is a win-win – it will create more rooftop, parking lot, and brownfield solar while providing a benefit to those who have been previously left behind in access to solar and the associated benefits. Once again, I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 264.