



SUPPORT
House Bill 936
Blue Ribbon Community Solar Land Use Commission

Environment and Transportation
March 2, 2022

Honorable Kumar Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Chesapeake Solar & Storage Association (CHESSA), thank you for the opportunity to issue our **SUPPORT** of **House Bill 936**, which will bring key stakeholders, including CHESSA, together to address land needs in each jurisdiction to meet full generation under the community solar pilot program.

Community solar plays a key role in Maryland meeting the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) solar obligation. Community solar projects are under 2 MW and are often under 16 acres. Ensuring a robust understanding of the land use needs and possible geographic allocation across all 24 Maryland jurisdictions is critical meeting full generation capacity of the community solar pilot program.

Land use change for solar is increasingly being recognized as distinct from other forms of development given its temporary, reversable nature, the minimal human disturbance of the ground and small infrastructure footprint. Incremental design and operation in the form of habitat/biodiversity, dual-use or other elements can provide additional ecosystem services and should be explored.

The establishment of a Blue-Ribbon Community Solar Land Use Commission will generate a fact-based approach to land use issues that balances the need for renewable energy and the ecosystem benefits of solar installations with potential land use and aesthetic concerns.

On behalf of CHESSA, thank you for your support of Maryland's solar industry. We urge a favorable report on House Bill 936.

Submitted by:

Stephanie Johnson
Executive Director