



Before the General Assembly of the State of Maryland

Environmental and Transportation Committee  
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Testimony of Leslie Ann Elder  
Mid-Atlantic Regional Director  
Coalition for Community Solar Access

**HB936: “Blue Ribbon Community Solar Land Use Commission”**  
**FAVORABLE**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Blue Ribbon Community Solar Land Use Commission. The Coalition for Community Solar Access (CCSA) submits testimony in strong support of Delegate Barve’s HB936.

CCSA is a national coalition of businesses and nonprofits working together to implement best practices for all community solar markets. Our mission is to empower all Maryland households and businesses that seek home grown energy sources through community solar. We work with customers, utilities, local stakeholders, allies and policymakers to develop and implement best practices that ensure community solar programs provide a win-win-win solution. Our members are solar industry leaders and are engaged at every step of development, ensuring these best practices are not theoretical but are applied and practiced. We represent over 80 member companies, some who are headquartered in Maryland and others who are investing here.

CCSA and our members are active participants in the community solar pilot program (CSEGs) and are thankful for the opportunity to work with state agencies and interested parties to find solutions to achieve the policy objectives of the state and local jurisdictions. HB936 creates a venue for critical stakeholders to determine and recommend land use needs for the remaining community solar pilot program and pending permanent program.

[The Department of Energy has committed to power 5 million households with community solar by 2025.](#) Community solar is a fast-growing solar segment and is touted as the way for policy makers to ensure solar generation is accessible for all. According to the latest [Solar Insight Report by Wood Mackenzie](#), there are 3,400 megawatts (MW) of installed community solar in the United States, which is enough to power 600,000 households. The US Department of Energy’s Community Solar goal of 8,3000 MW is an increase of more than 700% over the next four years. Currently, [there are 21 states](#) who have a community solar program and several states are moving quickly to advance legislation. Maryland was one of the earliest leaders in community solar with the passage of the pilot program ([HB1087 in 2015](#)) but has fallen behind as more and more states have adopted community solar. Delegate Barve’s HB936 is a common sense approach to facilitate critical conversations and make recommendations that will drive many of Maryland’s policy goals.

Today, only a fraction of Maryland households, approximately 25%, can access solar energy due to common limiting factors that include home or business ownership, the proper load bearing roof and sun



orientation, or financial barriers. Community solar allows anyone who pays an electric bill the opportunity to lower their energy burdens and receive all of the benefits for producing solar energy for their generation source. United States Department of Energy Secretary Jennifer M. Granholm stated “achieving these ambitious targets will lead to meaningful cost savings, create jobs in communities, and make our clean energy transition more equitable.”

Delegate Barve’s HB936 is simple and allows for a more efficient overall allocation of investments and better utilization of grid assets. Leveraging local solar will help Maryland achieve its unique energy demands and avoid costly distribution system investments. Thank you for your time and consideration for HB440 and CCSA hopes we can count on your support.

Respectfully,

Leslie Ann Elder, Mid-Atlantic Director  
Coalition for Community Solar Access