



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**January 19, 2021**

**HB 76**

**Community Solar Energy Generating Systems - Exemption From Energy and Property Taxes**

**House Ways and Means Committee**

**Position: Support**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch) dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

House Bill 76 exempts certain community solar energy generating systems from local energy taxes and personal property taxes; and generally relating to tax exemptions for community solar energy generating systems. Such exemptions will be established to a community solar energy generating system that provides at least 50% of the energy it produces to low- or moderate-income customers, as defined in regulations of the public service commission, at a cost that is at least 20% less than the amount charged by the electric company.

As Pope Francis has written, climate change “*represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day*” (*Laudato Si*, no. 25), threatening the wellbeing of peoples and the environment. Catholic social teaching envisions a sustainable and authentic human development, where technological solutions respect the principle of integral ecology and take into account social, economic and ecological considerations.

House Bill 76 aims to address the much needed investment in renewable energy policies to be set to sustain and achieve a healthy global ecosystem. We encourage discussion around the components and goals outlined in this legislation and hope they are a catalyst for positive social and ecological outcomes.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 76.