



8455 Colesville Rd., Suite 1025 – Silver Spring, MD 20910

Testimony on HB 0818

Position: Favorable

Submitted by:

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Submitted to: Senate Finance Committee

March 29, 2022

On behalf of Neighborhood Sun, a Silver Spring Maryland based community solar company, I ask for you to give HB 0818 a favorable report. As one of the only Maryland companies that is exclusively focused on community solar, we can tell you that our experience these last few years leads us to strongly support the need for low income residents to access community solar through utility consolidated billing (UCB). While the legislature, the state and the PSC have all done an admirable job in crafting our community solar program in such a way that it is meant to benefit low income Marylanders, the truth is that there is a market problem that goes beyond the program structure. Under the current program, low income residents, just like everyone else, are required to pay for their community solar shares via a separate payment mechanism, apart from their utility bill unless they sign away a power of attorney to their provider. Unfortunately, many of the low income residents we've approached do not have usable credit cards or bank accounts, and thus they are prevented from joining the program.

Additionally, when we do enroll low income residents, we give them smaller shares than they might otherwise get in order to accommodate the OHEP program. If their community solar charges were part of the electric bill, this issue would go away.

We are a company committed to bringing the promise of solar to everyone, not just the select few, so for us, ensuring that Maryland's low income residents can participate in community solar is paramount. We have been actively working in the market for almost four years and we've had some success in bringing in low income residents, but not nearly enough. Passing HB 0818 will finally make the program work for low income Marylanders just as well as it works for everyone else. Please support this bill.



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About Neighborhood Sun

We are a Maryland based clean energy social enterprise with a mission to bring the promise of solar energy to everyone, not just the select few. From our headquarters in Silver Spring, we've helped expand community solar to all over Maryland, DC, New York, Colorado, and many other states. Our Sun Engine advanced software platform allows thousands of subscribers connect to community solar projects while giving the project owners unprecedented control over the administration of the projects. For more information, go to www.neighborhoodsun.solar