



**SB0664 - Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Program - Tier 1 Renewable Sources, Solar Energy Systems, and Alterations**

**Testimony before Education, Energy and Environment Committee**

**February 28, 2023**

**Position: Favorable**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, my name is Barbara Matheson, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony in **support of SB0664**, requiring the Maryland Energy Administration to institute changes in the Strategic Energy Investment Program which provide for and protect low and middle income residents.

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) manages the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF). SEIF money makes Maryland's energy more affordable, cleaner and reliable through programs offered by MEA and other state agencies. Ideally, these programs address consumer energy costs, global climate change concerns, job creation, energy resilience, economic development, business retention, and energy freedom.

SB664 creates a strategic framework for MEA by legislating changes to SEIF regulations which insure energy costs for low-and-moderate income households will be fair and equitable. The bill establishes more accountability in selling ~~and~~ leasing renewable energy sources. It increases transparency in the application processes for grants, loans and other forms of financial assistance. It authorizes the use of compliance fees paid into the program for loans and grants. It creates new solar energy systems that are owned by or directly benefit low- and moderate-income residents.

It is essential that Environmental Justice be integral to all aspects of Maryland Energy Administration management of the Strategic Energy Investment Program.

**We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.**

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