

**OFFICERS**

ELIZABETH GREEN  
 President  
 ROBIN WEIMAN  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
 AMALIA HONICK  
 BENJAMIN ROSENBERG  
 RABBI STEVEN SCHWARTZ  
 RABBI JONATHAN SEIDEMANN  
 MELANIE SHAPIRO  
 RABBI ANDREW BUSCH  
 Past President  
 HOWARD LIBIT  
 Executive Director

**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

Adat Chaim Congregation  
 American Jewish Committee  
 Americans for Peace Now  
 Baltimore Chapter  
 American Israel Public Affairs Committee  
 American Red Magen David for Israel  
 American Zionist Movement  
 Amit Women  
 Association of Reform Zionists of America  
 Baltimore Board of Rabbis  
 Baltimore Hebrew Congregation  
 Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance  
 Baltimore Men's ORT  
 Baltimore Zionist District  
 Beth Am Congregation  
 Beth El Congregation  
 Beth Israel Congregation  
 Beth Shalom Congregation of  
 Howard County  
 Beth Tfiloh Congregation  
 B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region  
 B'nai Israel Congregation  
 B'nai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation  
 Bolton Street Synagogue  
 Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.  
 Chevrei Tzedek Congregation  
 Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
 Congregation Beit Tikvah  
 Congregation Tiferes Yisroel  
 Federation of Jewish Women's  
 Organizations of Maryland  
 Hadassah  
 Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation  
 J Street  
 Jewish Federation of Howard County  
 Jewish Labor Committee  
 Jewish War Veterans  
 Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary  
 Jewish Women International  
 Jews For Judaism  
 Moses Montefiore Anshe Emenah  
 Hebrew Congregation  
 National Council of Jewish Women  
 Ner Tamid Congregation  
 Rabbinical Council of America  
 Religious Zionists of America  
 Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation  
 Shomrei Emenah Congregation  
 Suburban Orthodox Congregation  
 Temple Beth Shalom  
 Temple Isaiah  
 Zionist Organization of America  
 Baltimore District

**Written Testimony**  
**House Bill 660 - Green and Renewable Energy for Nonprofit Organizations**  
**Loan Program and Fund**  
**Economic Matters Committee – February 8, 2024**  
**Support**

**Background: House Bill 660** would establish the Green and Renewable Energy for Nonprofit Organizations Loan Program and Fund under the Maryland Energy Administration. The fund would be established using \$5 million from the Governor's proposed budget in FY26 and an additional \$5 million in FY27, minus the amount left in the fund from the previous year. The purpose of the Program is to provide zero-interest loans to nonprofits that wish to purchase and install qualifying renewable energy systems. Nonprofits would be required to contribute at least 10% of the project's costs upfront, with priority given to nonprofits with annual budgets under \$1 million dollars.

**Written Comments:** The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* means to repair the world in which we live. As the advocacy arm of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, we represent organizations that work to educate the community on sustainability and make strides towards repairing the world. One of these entities is *The Pearlstone Center* in Reisterstown, MD, a conference center and farm that employs and teaches sustainable practices. *The Pearlstone Center* and The Associated jointly ran a [Green Loan Fund](#), similar to the fund that would be established in SB169, until 2023. The aggregate amount loaned through this fund totaled \$900,000 and the cumulative savings for nonprofits reached over \$1.5 million. Now, this program is combined with the national [Climate Action Fund](#), which is administered by Adamah – the umbrella organization that oversees the *Pearlstone Campus*, broadening the opportunities for nonprofits beyond the Baltimore region to benefit.

Further, the Associated has signed a 20-year lease for all Associated-owned properties to run on at least 50% solar. *The Pearlstone Center* currently operates on 85% solar, with 10 % coming from onsite solar and 75% coming from the Associated's large scale solar project.

Many nonprofits want to invest in green projects, but they do not have the capital reserves to fund them. HB660 would allow these nonprofits the chance to partake in a more sustainable future. We encourage this committee to join us in our mission to create a cleaner Maryland that is healthier for everyone.

**For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on HB660.**

***The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.***