

My name is David Murray, I am the founder and principal of Legacy Solar Partners, a consulting firm based in Alexandria, VA. As a Virginian and clean energy advocate, I wish I had access to the same options Marylanders can enjoy from a robust, retail electricity market. SB01 stands to eliminate these options, which are currently helping drive solar energy deployment and electric vehicle (EV) adoption.

SB01 implements measures that will overregulate product pricing, in turn removing innovation and preventing suppliers from continuing to offer tailored clean energy products to Maryland residents. Such examples include free solar energy weekends, fixed monthly billing, free EV charging, and most importantly, 100% renewable energy products. By my last count, Marylanders can choose from over thirty plans offering “100% renewable energy products.”

As a customer in a regulated retail market, how many options do I have? **Just one.** If I want to ensure 100% of my electricity use comes from clean energy, I have no choice but to select Dominion’s Green Power Program. The problem is, the utility has counted traditional resources, such as biomass (ie burning trees) and hydroelectric facilities, as renewable. Last year, this program purchased renewable energy credits from wind facilities in Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri - all states outside of our electricity grid! If I, and millions of Virginia residents, want to play a more active role in deploying wind and solar in our region, we’re out of luck. I urge Maryland, which currently offers customers at least thirty “100% renewable” options - not to go down the same path by passing SB01, which would effectively end its retail energy market.

The primary beneficiary of this bill appears to be incumbent utilities, who stand to gain hundreds of thousands of new customers if SB01 is enacted. Utilities cannot market directly to customers when they have monopoly power over the billing function - no competitive market exists where a single entity has that type of market advantage. Various provisions of SB01 - from established fixed prices to driving up the cost of salespersons - eliminate or make it very challenging for companies to offer 100% renewable products to customers. These companies would leave the market, handing their customer base to Standard Offer Service (SOS).

I urge the Committee to give SB01 an unfavorable vote and preserve Maryland’s retail market for clean energy.

Thank you,

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