



March 6, 2025

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Re: **HB 0827**: Solar Energy - Distributed Generation Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, Ground-Mounted Solar, and Small Solar Siting Workgroup - **FAVORABLE**

Chairs and members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

My name is John Miller. I live in Woodstock, Maryland located in Howard County. I represent Chaberton Energy ("Chaberton"). We are a Maryland based renewable energy company headquartered in Rockville, Maryland located in Montgomery County. We are a leading developer in the state's Community Energy Generating Systems ("CSEGS") Program. Just last year, Chaberton was named to the Inc. 5000 list as both the 34<sup>th</sup> fastest-growing private company and the 1<sup>st</sup> fastest-growing community solar company in the United States.

Chaberton's foundation was constructed around the framework that this body set up with the original Community Solar Pilot Program. In nearly five years, we have grown from just a company of just a few to one which now has over 50 employees. We have multiple solar projects operating in Maryland, as well as a robust pipeline of projects in construction and development. These projects are located in the very districts many of you represent.

The projects we develop deliver real and tangible benefits to your constituents. We save Marylanders an average of \$150 per household annually on their utility costs. Each Community Solar project supports well over \$2.5M in savings for subscribers, all of whom reside in Maryland and many of whom are Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) subscribers. As an industry, we support ensuring the benefits of solar energy flow to those who need it most. The energy bill savings we can offer to LMI subscribers are often even greater than these average cost savings and provide a necessary lifeline to those struggling to meet basic needs, including increased energy costs.

These projects also support Maryland by delivering additional tax revenue to the state and its counties. Each project delivers hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax revenue while not requiring any local services or costs. Additionally, they support local job creation and retention. While delivering tangible financial benefits, these projects also provide significant environmental benefits to support Maryland's efforts of being a leader on climate change. Based on the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator, a typical 2-megawatt ac project offsets carbon emissions by ~3,700 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year compared with electricity generated from traditional sources. This saves equal to the emissions of over 3.7M pounds of coal burned and over 3.8M miles driven by gasoline-powered cars. It is also equal to the same amount of carbon captured by nearly 4,000 acres of local forests. Those numbers are all for a single project!



Chaberton Energy has led the way amongst in community solar with the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity ("CPCN") process. We were the first to receive a Final Order from the Public Service Commission ("PSC") for a community solar project. We have a total of 17 CPCN applications in various stages, 11 of which are currently filed and 6 more which we plan to file by summer 2025, which represent more than 70MWac of in-state solar capacity. We commend the Public Service Commission, Power Plant Research Program, and the Public Utility Law Judges for their work in reviewing and processing these applications. We have found the process to be straight forward and without undue delays. However, we do have concerns that the project load will become overwhelming and may lead to project delays which are highly concerning due to the possibility that interconnection timeframes may cause projects to need to make decisions on making large interconnection payments without yet their CPCN approval in hand. Furthermore, due to the nature that the CPCN process was designed for very large-scale power generation facilities, the process is not designed to be efficient for relatively small scale solar projects.

We believe that the DG-CPCN process as outlined in this bill will lead to a more efficient approval process, leading to projects being able to come online sooner. If this effort is paired with SB0931 / HB 1036, the Renewable Energy Certainty Act, this would facilitate the ability to develop more projects and do so more efficiently, helping the State to meet its climate and clean energy goals.

In order to keep building on the successes of Maryland, to keep fostering jobs for a strong local economy, stimulating tax revenue, saving the people of Maryland money on their energy bills, supporting energy equity to LMI residents, and providing energy choice to all residents, it is imperative that we install solar more efficiently. We respectfully request a favorable report on HB 827.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Miller  
Chaberton Energy  
Vice President of Development