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Testimony SB23: Green and Renewable Energy for Nonprofits (“G.R.E.E.N.”)

Loan Program and Fund

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 10 AM

We are in the midst of a Climate Crisis, and solving it requires the engagement of governments, industry, individuals... and nonprofit organizations.

Upgrading to renewable energy can be expensive. Yet, these investments are needed to meet our clean energy goals and will ultimately save money. According to the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, [energy costs are the second-highest operational expense for many nonprofits](#).

Individuals and businesses can access tax credit incentive programs to make conversion more affordable. However, our 41,000+ tax-exempt organizations are ineligible for those benefits. Our solution is an interest-free, revolving loan program.

For the **past four years**, I’ve sponsored-- and the Senate has passed-- a bill that would create a pathway for 501(C)(3) nonprofits to help solve our Climate Crisis. Think of food pantries, veterans’ homes, fire stations, and performing arts centers. G.R.E.E.N. would reduce operational costs for nonprofits **and** reduce their carbon footprint with solar panels or geothermal heat pumps, for example.

When I called Congressman Jamie Raskin in 2022 about this bill, it inspired him to create two new programs within the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The U.S. Department of Energy established “Renew America’s Nonprofits” and “Renew America’s Schools,” distributing \$500 million to K-12 public schools and \$50 million to nonprofits to make energy efficiency upgrades to their facilities. Demand far exceeded available funds. Sadly, this program was eliminated by the new federal administration in 2025.

SB23 would establish a revolving, interest-free loan fund at the Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC). A participating nonprofit would contribute 10% of the project's cost and repay loans through savings generated by newly installed technologies. Priority would be given to applicants with annual budgets below \$1 million. This form of funding would ensure a reliably solvent structure-- even in tight fiscal times.

In October 2025, the Maryland Energy Administration announced \$36 million in grants from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund for the [Decarbonizing Public Schools Program](#). Let’s fund the Green and Renewable Energy for Nonprofits “G.R.E.E.N.” in a similar way and

support our remarkable nonprofits that serve people in all of our communities... hopefully for the fifth and final time!

I urge a favorable report on SB23.