

SB0026 RichardKaplowitz UNF

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Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON SB#/0026- POSITION: UNFAVORABLE**

**Public Utilities - Off-Grid Electricity Providers – Exemption**

**TO:** Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony opposing SB#/0026, **Public Utilities - Off-Grid Electricity Providers - Exemption**

This bill will loosen Maryland oversight on off-grid electricity providers. The United States Department of Energy has an explanation of *Off-Grid or Stand-Alone Renewable Energy Systems*<sup>1</sup>

For many people, powering their homes or small businesses using a small renewable energy system that is not connected to the electricity grid -- called a stand-alone system -- makes economic sense and appeals to their environmental values.

In remote locations, stand-alone systems can be more cost-effective than extending a power line to the electricity grid (the cost of which can range from \$15,000 to \$50,000 per mile). But these systems are also used by people who live near the grid and wish to obtain independence from the power provider or demonstrate a commitment to non-polluting energy sources. Successful stand-alone systems generally take advantage of a combination of techniques and technologies to generate reliable power, reduce costs, and minimize inconvenience. Some of these strategies include using fossil fuel or renewable hybrid systems and reducing the amount of electricity required to meet your needs.

Passing this bill says any person that qualified as an off-grid electricity provider whose electric generating facility subsequently interconnects with the electric system in the state, crosses state lines, or becomes located within or crosses any federal, state, or municipal roadway or right-of-way may no longer be considered an off-grid electricity provider for the purposes of this section.

This bill will exempt certain off-grid electricity providers from certain provisions of law; providing that a certain off-grid electricity provider is subject to certain laws concerning certificates of public convenience and necessity and certain other required approvals for the construction of a generating facility; providing that a person may not be considered to be an off-grid electricity provider under certain circumstances; and applying the Act to off-grid electricity providers that begin operations after October 1, 2026. This is bad policy for Maryland to be in control of this energy generation.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on SB#/0026.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/grid-or-stand-alone-renewable-energy-systems>