



Date: March 10, 2026

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB843: Net Energy Metering, SUNRISE Program, and Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program (SUNRISE Act)

Position: Favorable

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide favorable testimony on SB 843, Net Energy Metering, SUNRISE Program, and Community Solar Energy Generating Systems Program (SUNRISE Act).

Lodestar Energy LLC ("Lodestar") is an East Coast-focused renewable energy developer with its development office located in New York. Over our 10-year history, we have developed, owned, and operated over 40 solar projects, and we maintain an active pipeline of community solar projects in Maryland. We are committed to the continued success of renewable energy in the state and want to continue our investment in Maryland's economic development

By doubling down on its commitment to local power, Maryland would recognize that distributed generation is essential to the State's future. As regional electricity demand increases, Maryland has few tools in its toolbox to mitigate rapidly rising costs.

The SUNRISE Act recognizes that distributed solar helps to reduce homeowners' and businesses' bills while also bringing down grid costs. It sets up a transparent and predictable path to modernize the state's net metering program. And, it establishes a new relationship between community solar projects and the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) in order to create a direct path of savings to low-and-moderate income households.



Maryland residents are facing extraordinary utility bill prices because of three main reasons:

1. We are primarily dependent on a natural gas heavy market
2. The infrastructure is old, and needs significant upkeep and capital investment
3. The PJM market is seeing historic prices due to projected capacity challenges as the region faces rising electricity demand, which is due to historic projected load growth

Clean, distributed generation helps to mitigate all of these costs. These projects are financed using private capital, and their role as grid assets bring unique benefits to the distribution grid that lowers consumer energy costs by lowering utility costs.

Service Territory	Capacity Deployed (MW)	Annual Impact	Estimated Capacity Value (current capped price)	NET RATEPAYER SAVINGS
BGE	524.2	\$8,918,119	\$73,388,000	\$64,469,881
Pepco	315.7	\$4,526,955	\$44,198,000	\$39,671,045
DPL	119.1	\$2,673,104	\$16,674,000	\$14,000,896
PE	127.1	\$1,314,842	\$17,794,000	\$16,479,158

Above is a snapshot of distributed solar currently operating in Maryland in each investor-owned utility territory. The net ratepayer savings is a component of the bill impacts net metering has for each utility, and the capacity value of that solar based on the last PJM auction. **Without this operating solar, Maryland utilities would have needed to procure an additional \$152 million in capacity in addition to the record capacity auction results that are causing electric bills to increase.**

It is essential to maximize how much distributed generation comes online. Hundreds of megawatts of capacity are currently under development within the current net metering program. Changes to existing rules could pull the rug out from this in-development capacity *and undermine investor confidence in future energy program buildouts in Maryland.*



In addition, coordinating the community solar program with OHEP would unlock direct solar benefits for low-income households. These families are often most impacted by the energy affordability crisis. Coordinating the two programs would expand the range of tools to address the problem in the near term, complementing Medicaid, food stamps, and other public assistance. This program would allow community solar to augment the resources OHEP already has in place and enhance the ability of distributed solar to serve low-income households and communities.

Maryland can utilize distributed solar as a central tool to lower consumer and utility energy costs with SB 843. We look forward to working with this Committee to ensure Maryland remains a national leader in local, reliable, and equitable power.

Lodestar asks the committee for a favorable report on SB 843.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "O. Sandreuter", written in a cursive style.

Oliver Sandreuter
Director of Business Development