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RE: SB 341 – Affordable Solar Act

**Favorable**

Chair Feldman and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Coalition for Community Solar Access (CCSA) provides this written testimony regarding Senate Bill (SB) 341. CCSA's position on this legislation is Favorable.

CCSA is a national, business-led trade organization, composed of over 100 member companies, that works to expand access to clean, local, affordable energy nationwide through the development of robust community solar programs. Community solar projects involve medium-scale solar facilities that are shared by multiple community subscribers who receive credit on their electricity bills for their share of the power produced.

CCSA has been an active participant in the development and implementation of Maryland's community solar program, from its pilot stages to the permanent program it is today. We appreciate the General Assembly's support and leadership throughout the program's evolution and its embracement of community solar as an energy and affordability solution for the state. Community solar represents one of Maryland's most deployable energy sources and is a versatile tool for reducing electricity costs: particularly for low-and-moderate income customers, which make up at least 40% of the enrolled capacity for each permanent program project.

Senator Brooks SB 341 would help support the sustained growth of community solar and other solar market segments in Maryland, while providing regulatory flexibility to adjust to variables outside the control of the state's policy makers. It would also address shortcomings associated with Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and evolve its current incentive structure from a one-size-fits-all approach to a more sophisticated and cost-effective program design. For community solar and other distributed solar technologies, SB 341 would establish "Administrative Determined Incentive" (ADI) levels that are set and updated by the Public Service Commission and account for the specific needs of each segment. CCSA and its members have direct experience with this program design in neighboring New Jersey and can attest to its success in that state.

CCSA appreciates Senator Brooks dedication to solving the complex challenges associated with Maryland's energy needs and we endorse the direction taken in SB 341. We look forward to continuing to work with the Senator and this Committee to ensure a smooth transition for the solar market.

CCSA urges a favorable report on SB 341.

Sincerely,

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