



March 23, 2026

RE: House Bill (HB) 1532 – Utility RELIEF (Reducing Energy Load Inflation for Everyday Families) Act

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

Introduction: Thank you for the opportunity to submit favorable with amendment written testimony for HB 1532. Chaberton Energy is a Maryland-based distributed energy developer focused on community solar and energy storage. A public benefit corporation, Chaberton is one of the largest developers in the Maryland Community Solar Energy Systems (“CSEGS”) Program. Chaberton has over 200 Megawatts of community solar, commercial solar, and storage in active development here in Maryland. With a total development pipeline of more than one Gigawatt and over 100 Megawatts of projects completed, Chaberton is one of the fastest growing energy companies in the nation, ranked 53rd on the 2025 and 34th on the 2024 Inc. 5000 lists.

Background: House Bill 1532, among other topics, directs the Public Service Commission to initiate proceedings for the creation of a successor program for Net Energy Metering.

Comments: Chaberton Energy was established in Maryland following the creation of the community solar pilot program, and we have grown in these years to being one of the largest developers of distributed energy in the State. We have consistently doubled down our efforts in Maryland, expanding our headquarters and hiring additional staff to support our local efforts. Our work has further supported other local companies who participate in the clean energy economy, including civil engineers and electrical contractors. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, there are nearly 5,000 solar jobs in Maryland, and many more which are supported by our industry. We are a major part of the economy in the State.

As with any business, legislative and regulatory certainty is paramount to our success. We need to ensure any legislation which establishes a successor program for net metering provides certainty for both in-operation and for in-development projects, in which significant capital has been invested. Any uncertainty can have a disastrous impact to the clean energy economy in the State, halting investments into capital energy projects as well as the ability for companies like Chaberton to continue to retain staff, hire, and support other businesses. Undoubtedly, immediate changes are likely to have a negative impact on solar jobs.

Under current law and regulation, community solar projects are explicitly allowed to operate under Net Energy Metering until the it is decommissioned. Any change to this represents a retroactive change that introduces significant legislative and regulatory uncertainty into the energy market. This precedent should be clarified in House Bill 1532 to make clear that projects that qualify under

Net Energy Metering shall follow existing law and regulations in operating under Net Energy Metering until decommissioned.

It is necessary that the maturity requirement deadline for CSEGS to qualify under Net Energy Metering be extended to January 1, 2028. This change is necessary due to the significant delays and missed deadlines in the interconnection process for distributed generation solar projects with the utilities. These extended delays, which were also discussed in great detail with the Public Service Commission during Public Conference 73 as well as other proceedings, provide a significant risk that late-stage projects, which represent significant invested capital, will not be able to qualify due to the utilities missing certain milestones. The request to move the deadline for CSEGS to meet the maturity requirements under 7-306(d)(2)(i) legislation to January 1, 2028 provides mitigation to this issue.

It is important the General Assembly understands the whole picture of what is leading to increased energy prices in Maryland. The Office of Peoples Counsel (“OPC”) analysis¹ on increases to BG&E energy bills identifies 2 key factors to increased energy bills. Regarding delivery charges, the OPC finds that “Generally, distribution charges have gone up in recent years because of a high rate of utility spending on new, long-lasting infrastructure, such as electric wires and poles, substations, meters, computers, trucks and other equipment. More spending increases utility profits as customers pay for the infrastructure through rate increases.” Supply rate increases have been primarily driven by capacity market prices, for which OPC identifies the demands resulting from data centers in PJM to be the primary driver. Distributed Generation, like CSEGS, provides local energy generation, which diminishes the need for expensive imports and expensive/controversial transmission infrastructure. Furthermore, it increases the utilization of the existing distribution system while contributing to Maryland taxes and economic development.

It is also important that the General Assembly understand the electric markets outside of Maryland to better understand what is happening here. While it appears certain organizations have identified the implementation of renewable energy as a primary driver for increased energy costs, looking at trends across the Country prove that to be untrue. West Virginia, for example, has experienced above average electric rate increases. According to Fox Appalachia², “West Virginia’s residential electricity price appears to have jumped 30–37% over the 2019–24 period compared to the national jump of 20-23% in the same period.” It is important to note that West Virginia ranks 46th in national rankings of installed solar according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. Outside of PJM, Kentucky, which ranks 33rd in national rankings but has nearly no net metered solar, is also experiencing increased residential energy prices, with Kentucky Power recently requesting a 14% rate increase³. These references prove that energy rate increases are not unique to Maryland, or unique to states with significant solar penetration or net metering regulations.

Conclusion: For the reasons stated above, Chaberton provides this favorable with amendment testimony for HB 1532. We respectfully request the Committee strongly consider ensuring business certainty for businesses like Chaberton Energy. Please do not hesitate to reach out should the Committee have any questions.

¹<https://opc.maryland.gov/Why-is-my-winter-BGE-bill-so-high>

²<https://wchstv.com/news/local/west-virginians-struggle-to-afford-power-bills-during-extended-stretch-of-winter-weather>

³<https://kentuckylantern.com/2026/03/02/state-regulator-approves-reduced-increase-in-kentucky-power-rates-following-emotional-pleas/>

Respectfully Submitted:

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On behalf of:

Chaberton Energy
A Montgomery County founded and headquartered business

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