



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

**Position: Favorable**

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
Cc: Members of the Committee

Chair Feldman and members of the Committee,

Economic Action Maryland Fund urges a favorable report on SB843, which would provide cost-savings for low- to moderate-income households by creating new pathways to connect to community solar energy projects.

As the members of this committee are painfully aware, energy rates have risen dramatically in recent years due to a variety of factors. Thousands of Marylanders each year face shutoff notices due to nonpayment, while many others are forced to juggle multi-hundred-dollar utility bills alongside the ever-increasing costs of rent, groceries, and other necessities. In fact, when Economic Action Maryland Fund surveyed our members and other stakeholders this winter, 63% stated utility bills were their primary concern.

According to industry analysis, participants in community solar programs save between 5% and 25% on their energy bills every month.<sup>1</sup> By connecting with existing solar generation, there are no up-front costs to the ratepayer, which is a significant benefit for low-income households that do not have the capital to invest in household solar. However, there remain significant barriers to connecting LMI ratepayers with these projects. These households are increasingly wary of energy scams, and are less likely to trust community solar staff engaged in outreach. And the process of registering for community solar can be difficult.

SB843 creates a streamlined process to proactively enroll LMI households in these programs, saving these families time and money. For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB843.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Deputy Director

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<sup>1</sup> <https://mdcommunitysolar.org/saving-money-with-maryland-community-solar-a-complete-guide/>

*Economic Action (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) champions economic rights and housing justice through advocacy, research, consumer education, and direct service. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.*