



March 12, 2026

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

Written Testimony

SB 843: 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 Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of the SUNRISE Act (SB 843). My name is Scott Elias, and I am the Director of Policy and Market Development at CleanCapital, a leading independent power producer that develops, owns, operates, and invests in distributed solar and energy storage projects across the United States. I also serve as Vice President of the Chesapeake Solar & Storage Association (CHESSA) and as Co-Chair of SEIA's Mid-Atlantic Committee.

CleanCapital has invested more than \$1.5 billion in clean energy projects serving corporations, municipalities, universities, schools, hospitals, utilities, and community solar subscribers. In Maryland, we own and operate 20 projects totaling more than 26 megawatts, with more than a dozen additional projects in construction or development. Many of these projects will participate in the state's community solar program, delivering meaningful savings to low- and moderate- income (LMI) households and expanding access to clean energy for customers who otherwise would not be able to benefit.

At a time when Marylanders are facing significant increases in their utility bills, expanding access to community solar is one of the most immediate tools available to provide relief. Community solar subscribers receive consistent and considerable bill savings without the upfront costs of installing solar. For LMI households, these savings are both meaningful and predictable.

SB 843 builds on the success of Maryland's community solar framework by creating new, practical pathways to ensure that additional LMI households can receive the full benefits of program participation. Under current law, community solar energy generating systems (CSEGs) must dedicate at least 40% of their kilowatt-hour output to LMI subscribers. The SUNRISE Act expands compliance flexibility by establishing two additional methods for satisfying this requirement:

1. Allowing CSEGs to dedicate 8% of annual output at no cost to eligible households through coordination with the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) or the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA); and

2. Enabling coordination with OHEP or another local administering agency to identify and enroll eligible households directly.

These additional pathways are both pragmatic and impactful. By leveraging existing state agencies that already serve income-qualified households, SB 843 ensures that community solar bill credits reach the Marylanders who need relief the most – including hard-to-reach and vulnerable ratepayers who may not otherwise enroll in the state’s community solar program.

The bill also appropriately recognizes the broader system value of distributed solar and the role it can play in mitigating rising ratepayer costs. Because it serves local load, reduces peak demand, and can defer certain transmission and distribution investments, distributed generation helps mitigate system costs while expanding customer choice. That makes distributed solar part of the affordability solution — not a cost driver.

Equally important, SB 843 also establishes a transparent and predictable pathway to modernize Maryland’s net metering framework and creates a structured transition to a successor program. As Maryland approaches the statutory 3,000-megawatt net-metering cap established by the legislature, thoughtful transition design will be essential to ensure projects already in development can reach completion while the state prepares the next phase of its distributed energy policy.

For companies like CleanCapital — long-term owners and institutional capital providers to distributed generation developers nationwide — predictable transition rules are essential to ensuring that projects already in development can reach completion.

Distributed solar projects require significant upfront investment and typically move through a multi-year development process that includes site control, engineering studies, permitting, and utility interconnection. Many projects currently in development were planned based on the framework the legislature established when it adopted the 3,000-megawatt net-metering cap. Ensuring that transition rules are clear and predictable will help ensure those projects can move forward and continue delivering bill savings to Maryland customers.

In practice, this means ensuring that projects which have advanced through clearly defined development milestones — such as securing a position in the community solar energy generating systems approved program queue — can proceed under the framework in place when those investments were made.

In Maryland, many projects currently under development are advancing with the expectation that capital providers like CleanCapital will acquire and own them upon completion. For those projects, clarity around transition rules is not academic — it is determinative. Regulatory uncertainty at the boundary between existing and successor programs directly affects whether capital can be committed to complete projects already in development.

That is why it is critical that the SUNRISE Act’s transition provisions (a) protect projects that have made material investments under the current framework and (b) provide clear, predictable rules for projects moving into the successor program. A well-designed transition will ensure Maryland

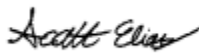
continues attracting private capital to deploy one of the few energy resources that can be built quickly, reduce peak pressure, and deliver savings directly to customers.

Stable and predictable program transitions allow developers and investors to plan around clear timelines — ensuring that projects already underway can move forward and continue delivering bill savings and local investment.

CleanCapital respectfully urges the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 843.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued leadership on advancing equitable clean energy policy in Maryland.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Elias". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "S".

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