



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 950

DATE: February 24, 2026

SPONSOR: Delegates Behler and Kaufman

ASSIGNED TO: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT PERSON: Melanie Wenger

POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Transportation)

Public Utilities – Street Lighting Equipment – Acquisitions and Reporting (County and Municipal Street Lighting Investment Act)

House Bill 950 enables counties and municipalities to purchase street lighting equipment at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission calculated net book value from the equipment owner. This bill empowers counties, through their condemnation powers, to acquire equipment in the event an agreement is not reached. It directs the electric utilities to file tariffs with the Public Service Commission that only include electrical distribution fees, which would allow the local government to choose its own energy supplier, an option available to most other consumers. Finally, the bill requires that all investor-owned utilities file a report by October 1, 2026, to clearly set monthly tariff rates for electric distribution services to be paid by jurisdictions owning streetlights.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation supports the environmental and economic goals sought by this legislation. This bill provides jurisdictions greater flexibility to take ownership and manage operations of streetlights and provides a clear pathway to acquire these facilities. Additionally, this sets a clear cost structure to set electricity use rates to make payments more transparent, offers greater options for service providers, and with greater pricing emphasis on electricity usage itself, provides clearer advantage for jurisdictions to upgrade existing equipment to become more energy efficient. Other states, such as in California and Rhode Island, have enabled local governments to purchase street lighting infrastructure. In implementing similar regulations, these jurisdictions have observed lower maintenance costs (due to lower overhead), decreased energy usage, and improved reliability because of the installation of LED bulbs. The Department also supports the additional flexibility this legislation would provide to jurisdictions, particularly a number of municipalities in Montgomery County, who are interested in adopting these practices.

With the aforementioned points in mind, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation supports House Bill 950 and requests a favorable report from the Committee.