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**BILL NO.:** Senate Bill 0434/House Bill 0702 – Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund - Uses - Cooperative Housing Corporations and Condominiums (Co-Op and Condo Energy Refund Equity Act)

**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
Environment and Transportation

**HEARING DATE:** February 25, 2026 (B&T)  
February 24, 2026 (ENT)

**SPONSOR:** Senator Love  
Delegates Korman, Wolek, and Woorman

**POSITION:** Informational

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The Office of People's Counsel (OPC) respectfully offers the following informational comments on Senate Bill 0434/House Bill 0702, the Co-Op and Condo Energy Refund Equity Act. SB 0434/HB 0702 appears intended to rectify the fact that some owners of condominium units and members of cooperative housing corporations were unable to receive last year's legislative energy relief refunds because they receive utility services through what's known as a master- or sub-metering arrangement.

Utility companies use meters to measure how much of each utility service—gas, electricity, or water—is used. While most utility customers have their own meters and accounts with the utility company, master metering refers to an arrangement whereby a single meter measures how much electricity, gas, or water is used for the whole property. The property owner or manager gets the bill for the whole property and then decides how to divide the cost among the residents. Consequently, individual units do not have their own utility accounts. Based on a survey commissioned by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC), in 2018 there were 840 electric master meter accounts and 3,393

natural gas accounts identified.<sup>1</sup> Some buildings have sub-meters, which allow each unit to have its own internal meter after a master meter. There is also a sub-meter for shared spaces like hallways, offices, or elevators. In a sub-metering arrangement, building owners read each unit’s sub-meter and send individual bills to each resident, while costs for shared spaces are usually added to rent or fees. In these arrangements, residents of individual units still do not have their own utility accounts.

During the proceeding to implement the refunds required by the Next Generation Energy Act, the PSC directed the parties to discuss whether master-metered customers could participate in the refund crediting process.<sup>2</sup> As PSC Staff explained, none of the utilities—apart from Easton Utilities—were able to provide the required refunds to master-metered customers “because the customers do not have account numbers, and their usage may not be considered residential because the owner of the property where there is master-metered residences is likely considered commercial load, meaning the landowner’s account would be considered commercial.”<sup>3</sup>

OPC appreciates the intent of SB 0434/HB 0702 as we understand it: to enable a subset of the master-metered customers in the State—specifically owners of condominium units and members of cooperative housing corporations—to receive the legislatively directed refunds. It’s important to note, however, that condominiums and cooperative housing corporations are not the only types of housing that utilize master meters or submeters—some apartment buildings and mobile home parks do too, and these residents are arguably more likely to need the refund. If the Committee determines to advance the intended relief to owners of condominiums and members of cooperative housing corporations, OPC recommends that the Committee consider extending the same relief to all master-metered customers.

Additionally, it’s worth noting that while SB 0434/HB 0702 would require the PSC to oversee the process of distributing refunds to individual unit owners or members through the relevant governing body or board of directors, the PSC has no authority to regulate those entities and likely no way to ensure that they are distributing the refunds as required under the statute.

OPC appreciates the opportunity to provide these informational comments on SB 0434/HB 0702.

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<sup>1</sup> Md. Pub. Serv. Comm’n, *Master Meter Conversion Study – Required by Md. HB 1491, Ch. 532, section 2 of the Laws of Md. – 2018 (MSAR #11699)* (Jan. 15, 2019) at 4, <https://www.pscmaryland.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Final-Master-Meter-Conversion-Study-2018.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Md. Pub. Serv. Comm’n, Order No. 91712 (Case No. 9798, June 26, 2025) at 16.

<sup>3</sup> ML No. 320374 (Case No. 9798, July 11, 2025).