



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Gloria Brown Burnett, Interim Secretary

March 3, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY ON HB 1195 - NET ENERGY METERING, SUNRISE PROGRAM, AND COMMUNITY SOLAR ENERGY GENERATING SYSTEMS PROGRAM (SUNRISE ACT) - POSITION: INFORMATION

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for its consideration and opportunity to provide information on House Bill 1195 (HB 1195).

With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS provides preventative and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to employment development and career opportunities to assist Marylanders in reaching their full potential. Our Family Investment Administration's (FIA) Office of Home Energy Program (OHEP) administers energy assistance for low-income Marylanders whose access to affordable renewable energy under the Community Solar Energy Generating System Program (the "Program") is affected by HB 1195.

Generally, community solar energy generating systems constructed under the Program are required by current law to serve at least 40% of its kilowatt-hour (kWh) output to low- and moderate-income (LMI) subscribers. An LMI customer may subscribe to a generating system located in the same electric company service territory as the customer. LMI customers subscribed to a generating system are guaranteed an electric bill savings of at least 10% of the value of the applied bill credits. OHEP supports LMI customer participation in the Program by providing households with information about solar energy and the opportunity to automatically enroll, unless they prefer to opt-out. However, the Public Service Commission (PSC) is solely responsible for administering the Program. Please see the January [briefing](#) by OHEP and the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) for more information on LMI community solar energy.

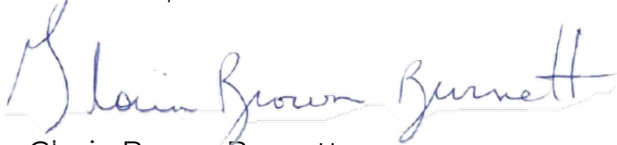
OHEP is in the very early stages of administering a community solar pilot in partnership with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). The pilot began in January 2026. OHEP is working with six local administering agencies (LAAs) to provide community solar program information to eligible households. OHEP will provide data about pilot-eligible households to enable subscription managers and partner organizations to launch community solar projects and connect with participating households. Under the pilot, OHEP is limited to referring eligible customers and securing sensitive customer information. As part of the pilot structure, LAAs receive \$50 for each referral they submit, and OHEP separately receives \$50 upon successful enrollment of the household. There is no outcome data yet available to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot.

HB 1195 would add considerable new duties for OHEP under the Program. Under HB 1195, OHEP would be required to allocate a dedicated block of capacity among eligible low-income households, enabling enrolled customers to receive—at no cost—the benefits of 8% of kWh output designated by electric companies for OHEP customers. The bill also assigns OHEP primary responsibility for Program administration, including enrollment, customer communication, and ongoing subscription management for LMI participants.

Given the significant uncertainty in federal policy and the escalating fiscal shortfalls forecast through Fiscal Year 2028, the Department urges caution against legislation that increases expenditures or diverts revenue without sustainable funding offsets. In light of the current fiscal crisis, the State must remain disciplined and strategic in its funding decisions to protect essential services for all Marylanders.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony for the Committee's consideration. If additional information is needed, please contact Justin Hayes, Acting Director of Government Affairs, at justin.hayes1@maryland.gov.

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gloria Brown-Burnett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

Gloria Brown-Burnett
Interim Secretary