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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

HB695: Green and Renewable Energy Efficiency for Nonprofits (GREEN) Loan Program and Fund – Establishment

House Environment & Transportation Committee

February 17, 2026

SUPPORT

Background: House Bill 695 would establish the Green and Renewable Energy Efficiency for Nonprofits (GREEN) Loan Program and Fund under the Maryland Clean Energy Center. The fund would be established using \$5 million from the Governor’s proposed budget in FY28. The purpose of the Program is to provide zero-interest loans to nonprofits that wish to purchase and install qualifying renewable energy systems. Nonprofits would be required to contribute at least 10% of the project’s costs upfront, with priority given to nonprofits with annual budgets under \$1 million dollars.

Written Comments: The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* means to repair the world in which we live. As the advocacy arm of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, we represent organizations that work to educate the community on sustainability and make strides towards repairing the world. One of these entities is *The Pearlstone Center* in Reisterstown, MD, a conference center and farm that employs and teaches sustainable practices. *The Pearlstone Center* and The Associated jointly ran a [Green Loan Fund](#), similar to the fund that would be established in HB695, until 2023. The aggregate amount loaned through this fund totaled \$900,000 and the cumulative savings for nonprofits reached over \$1.5 million. Now, this program is combined with the national [Climate Action Fund](#), which is administered by Adamah – the umbrella organization that oversees the *Pearlstone* Campus, broadening the opportunities for nonprofits beyond the Baltimore region to benefit.

Further, the Associated has signed a 20-year lease for all Associated-owned properties to run on at least 50% solar. *The Pearlstone Center* currently operates on 85% solar, with 10 % coming from onsite solar and 75% coming from the Associated’s large scale solar project.

Nonprofits should be encouraged and assisted to play a larger role in Maryland’s transition to Green Energy. Many nonprofits want to invest in green projects, but they do not have the capital reserves to fund them. HB695 would allow these nonprofits the chance to partake in a more sustainable future. We encourage this committee to join us in our mission to create a cleaner Maryland that is healthier for everyone. **For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB695.**

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.