



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1607

**Community Solar Energy Generating Systems – Prohibited Locations – Adjacent Parcels
Delegate Darrell Odom**

House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 13, 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 1607.

HB 1607 makes a straightforward but important technical correction to Maryland's community solar law. The bill repeals a prohibition that prevents the development of community solar projects when the combined installed capacity of systems on adjacent parcels exceeds certain thresholds. In practice, this limitation has created unintended barriers to responsible solar deployment and has prevented otherwise appropriate projects from moving forward.

Community solar remains one of Maryland's most effective tools for expanding access to renewable energy. Unlike rooftop solar, community solar allows residents—including renters, seniors, and households without suitable roofs—to subscribe to a shared solar facility and receive credits on their electric bills.

However, under current law, projects located on adjacent parcels may be treated as though they are a single larger project when determining allowable capacity. As a result, projects that otherwise meet all program requirements can be disqualified simply because of how parcel boundaries happen to be drawn.

HB 1607 removes that artificial restriction and ensures that separate projects are evaluated individually, rather than aggregated across neighboring parcels.

Anticipated Questions and Concerns

Concern: Developers may attempt to divide a larger project across multiple parcels.

Community solar projects are already subject to strict program rules administered by the Public Service Commission. Each project must independently qualify for the program, meet interconnection requirements, and comply with subscriber eligibility rules. This bill does not

alter those safeguards—it simply ensures that projects are not disqualified based on parcel boundaries alone.

Concern: Removing the adjacent parcel limitation could allow excessive solar development in one location.

Solar development in Maryland is governed by the standards established under the Renewable Energy Certainty Act, which created statewide siting rules for solar facilities. Those rules include setbacks, environmental protections, and other land-use controls designed to ensure projects are appropriately located. HB 1607 does not alter those requirements in any way.

Concern: This could encourage solar development on agricultural land.

The Renewable Energy Certainty Act already addresses this issue through statewide siting standards that balance renewable energy development with agricultural preservation. HB 1607 does not change where solar facilities may be located—it only addresses how capacity is counted across parcel lines.

Concern: This bill allows projects to exceed the intended scale of community solar.

The maximum capacity limits for community solar projects remain unchanged. Each project must still comply with the size limits established under Maryland’s community solar program. HB 1607 simply prevents separate projects from being treated as one project because they happen to be located on adjacent parcels.

Why This Bill Matters

Maryland has set ambitious renewable energy goals, and community solar is an important tool for achieving them while expanding access to clean energy for households across the state.

The adjacent parcel restriction has proven to be a technical obstacle that prevents viable projects from moving forward without delivering meaningful policy benefits. HB 1607 removes that unnecessary barrier while leaving Maryland’s solar siting standards and program safeguards fully intact.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a **favorable report on House Bill 1607**.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions.