

Johnathan Medlock, Acting Mayor, District Heights

Committee: House Economic Matters

Testimony on: HB 561 - “Electric Industry – Community Choice Energy”

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 13, 2020

I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 561, a bill that would enable local governments to implement a “community choice energy plan,” and thereby combine the electricity purchasing power of their residents to reduce ratepayer costs and select an electricity source favored by those residents.

As the Acting Mayor of the City of District Heights I have been hearing concerns from residents about the rising cost of energy as well as uncertainty about which renewable plan to select. CCE is a tool for energy democracy by allowing communities to control their electricity purchase, choosing the right mix for our municipalities. Elected municipal officials are directly answerable to our constituents and would also be participants in the CCE. Municipal governments would be able to do the research to pick the right plan as well as use the power of the number of residents in our municipality to negotiate with energy providers to achieve a more competitive rate.

This bill provides many benefits to Maryland and to our constituents. It supports local governments’ role in serving our residents, promises lower costs for ratepayers – especially for households burdened by energy costs – and offers an important mechanism to move Maryland toward its green energy and green development goals. It is a win-win-win for Maryland. I urge a favorable report by this Committee.

Johnathan Medlock
Acting Mayor
City of District Heights