



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

March Elrich
County Executive

**Testimony of County Executive Marc Elrich
In Support of House Bill 561
*Electric Industry – Community Choice Energy***

**Economic Matters Committee
February 13, 2020**

We all know – we’re in the midst of a climate emergency.

In Montgomery County, we declared a climate emergency calling on all levels of government to “initiate a massive global mobilization to restore a safe climate and build a sustainable economy” and “transform the climate by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2027 ... and initiate large-scale efforts to remove excess carbon from the atmosphere.”

We must take all possible steps to address climate change and move to clean, renewable energy – as quickly and as widely as possible. And this work must be done at every level of government.

House Bill 730 gives local governments one important tool as we work towards eliminating greenhouse gas emissions. And it is a tool that encourages competition – the county could offer a large contract that would require clean energy at a reasonable price. I can’t think of a better way for local governments to encourage competition for clean energy.

Community Choice Energy (“CCE”) gives local governments a chance to better control our fuel sources. House Bill 730 does not require us to implement a CCE, but it gives us the option to act. And it really is a tool that we need.

It gives us a chance to purchase and generate clean energy for as many residents and businesses as possible. It also has the potential to lower rates for consumers.

I understand some may worry about an “opt-out” rather than an “opt in” approach. Any effort we undertake would include a widespread education component explaining what we would be doing and why we’re doing it.

I also realize that there are some outstanding issues to be worked out on this bill – I think we can resolve them and I urge you to pass this bill.

With CCE, we think we can move faster toward clean energy and lower rates for consumers. Please work with us to give us this option.

Thank you.