



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 4, 2020

Committee: Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

Bill: SB 835 – County and Municipal Street Lighting Investment Act

Position: Support

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports SB 835 which authorizes a local government, subject to specified requirements, to (1) convert its street lighting service to an alternative-energy-only tariff established under the bill; (2) submit a request to acquire the street lighting equipment, as defined, from the electric company at some or all locations within the county or municipality; and (3) enter into an agreement to purchase electricity for the use of the street lighting equipment from any available electricity supplier. If the county or municipality and the electric company fail to agree to the purchase price or conditions of purchase of the street lighting equipment, the county or municipality may acquire the equipment by condemnation, subject to specified requirements.

Since legislation was first enacted in 2007 to permit local government purchase of street lighting equipment from private entities, discussions between municipalities and power companies have proved fruitless in finding agreement on the fair market value of street lighting equipment. Since then, few municipalities have successfully negotiated the sale of street lights. The League hopes that the articulation in law of considerations that may be considered in determining fair market value of street light equipment will provide an equitable means of breaking the stalemate that has persisted in this area and set forth a process by which municipalities will be able to purchase and maintain streetlights.

As SB 835 will help municipalities address these ongoing issues, the Maryland Municipal League supports this bill and asks this committee to provide the bill with a favorable report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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