

**Michele Kurtz**

**Committee: Finance**

**Testimony on: SB315 - "Electric Industry – Community Choice Energy"**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: February 25, 2020**

Thank you for considering my written testimony in support of the proposed Community Choice Energy Act, also known as CCE.

I have never considered myself an environmental activist. But like so many of us, in recent years I have become increasingly concerned about climate change and wondering what I can do to address it. In September I helped organize Montgomery County's Climate Emergency town hall, focused on the county's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2027. It was standing room only, and a lot of the people there were just like me — new to this, and wanting to do something locally to reverse the path the world is on.

Here in Maryland, and especially in Montgomery County, there is strong and growing support for moving to clean energy. CCE would allow communities that choose to, to rapidly make the shift away from fossil fuels and toward renewables. CCE is the linchpin to local communities' efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a meaningful way. In my neighborhood, both Takoma Park and Montgomery County are counting on CCE to help them meet their climate change goals.

There are other compelling reasons to support it as well. When the concept began in a handful of states in the late 1990s, the goal was to pool large groups of consumers in order to save money on electricity bills. Communities can still make that a priority and I'm sure they will. And with the sharp drop in prices for solar and wind energy, a renewable alternative is *now also a cheaper one*.

This legislation empowers communities to make choices based on their residents' values, priorities and needs. And individuals who don't like it can opt out. CCE puts the power in the hands of the people. Quite literally.

I am the mother of two teenagers. This month one of them said he thinks it's too late for the world to prevent widespread climate catastrophe. I was floored, and sick. He assumes he and his sister will inherit a scorched landscape with myriad problems we can only imagine. But I think there's still time to take actions that will help avert a disaster. I told him so.

Please help prove me right and support this very important proposed legislation. Let us in Maryland get quickly on the road toward a more sustainable future.

Thank you,  
Michele Kurtz

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