



To Lead, Advocate and Connect as the Voice of Business

Senate Bill 315: Electric Industry – Community Choice Energy

Finance Committee

February 25, 2020

OPPOSE

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce ("MCCC"), as the voice of Montgomery County business, opposes Senate Bill 315. This legislation allows counties and municipalities to form Community Choice Aggregators that purchase or generate electricity for the residential and small commercial electricity customers within their jurisdiction. After sending only one written message, the bill allows local governments to automatically enroll customers – including small businesses – if the customer fails to opt-out within 30 days. Further, if a customer attempts to opt-out after 180 days, the legislation authorizes a Community Choice Aggregator to charge the customer an exit fee.

For decades, Maryland has championed policies that celebrate an electricity customer's right to choose a power supplier. This legislation erodes the state's support for customer choice by allowing Community Choice Aggregators to enroll customers without their affirmative consent.

In stripping customers of their choice, Senate Bill 315 advances no policy priorities for cleaner nor more affordable electricity. The bill sets no renewable energy standards and allows local governments to auto-enroll customers for aggregation, even if the Community Choice Aggregator's service is more expensive than the utility default service.

This legislation compromises customer choice and is inconsistent with the interests of Montgomery County businesses. For these reasons, **we request an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 315.**