



# Mayor & Council of Berlin

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**Town Attorney**

David Gaskill

**Town Administrator**

Jeffrey Fleetwood



Written Testimony

Town of Berlin, Maryland

Senate Bill 153

Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Municipal Electric Utilities

Position: Support

Dear Chairman Kelley and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Zack Tyndall and I am the Mayor of the Town of Berlin. I am writing this letter of support for SB153 on behalf of the citizens of Berlin.

The Town of Berlin operates a peak shaving electric utility department that employs ten full-time personnel, including two linesman apprentices. Our electric department generates power when the cost of purchasing power on the open market is very high. By running our generators in the Town of Berlin, we are able to help the citizens save over \$500,000 annually. The value of owning and operating a municipal electric utility is demonstrated through our short outage times and superior customer service.

When SB516 was passed, it put a financial burden on the Town of Berlin and the four other electric generating municipalities in the State of Maryland. Due to the sheer size of our municipal electric utility, the current renewable portfolio energy standards place us and the other municipal electric utilities at a disadvantage when we are competing to purchase renewable energy credits (REC's) on the open market. The Town of Berlin produces roughly 0.14% of the total electric used throughout the entire State of Maryland and all five municipal electric utilities in Maryland produce just over 1%. The minimal production and scale of the five municipal electric utilities in Maryland has resulted in our taxpayers having to pay 45% more than other electric utility providers in the State when we are purchasing REC's on the open market.

The Town of Berlin continues to take proactive steps toward improving our electric utility's impact on the environment. For decades, our electric utility has utilized diesel generators during times of peak shaving. However, the Town of Berlin recently began the transition to cleaner, natural gas generators last year. The newly installed natural gas generator omits 30% less CO2 compared to its diesel-powered predecessor. In addition, the Town of Berlin is working with the Maryland Energy Administration to install a 48 KWh rooftop solar project this year. We recognize and remain committed to preserving our environment for future generations.

I urge a favorable report from your committee.

Respectfully,

Zack Tyndall, MBA, NRP

Mayor, Town of Berlin