



HB 31- SUPPORT
Travis Street
Living Classrooms Foundation
tstreet@livingclassrooms.org
Phone: 410-835-1463

**HB 31 Support
Expanding Clean Energy Microgrids
For Low and Moderate Income Communities**

**Economic Matters Committee
February 3rd, 2022**

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

Hello, I am Travis Street the Director of Family and Community and Engagement for the Living Classrooms Foundation. I am also the Director of Living Classrooms at POWER House in Baltimore.

In 2017-18, Living Classrooms Foundation's POWER House Community Center was equipped with solar panels and battery storage and is the first solar powered public housing community resiliency center in the nation. We installed this system so POWER House would be prepared to assist the 1,400 residents of Perkins Homes in the event of extreme weather, human-created disruptions such as fires, uprisings, or large-scale power outages by providing heat/air conditioning, power, water, food, and communication options, while also continuing to offer diverse education, workforce, and support services for all ages. The system is being used as a resource for the community when the grid fails, creating enough clean energy to provide up to seventy-two (72) hours of sustainable power to the community center.

The system is used all the time. The power goes out in the Perkin Homes community very frequently on the hottest days in the summer. In the winter, although the power doesn't go out as often, the solar system provides clean energy and serves as a heating center for residents as they do their daily errands. In July 2018, we used the system to its maximum capacity by running it for 72 hours during a power outage. On this day, we were able to host the community, provide critical care for seniors on continuous home oxygen therapy, and refrigerate temperature sensitive medicines for community members.

Our microgrid system is a vital for the resilience of the community and I look forward to more resilience hubs being built in low-income communities across Maryland.

I request a favorable report on HB 31.