



**Committee: Economic Matters**

**Testimony on: HB440 - Electricity - Community Solar Energy Generation Systems- Generating Capacity**

**Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition**

**Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: February 10, 2022**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB440. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB440.

Community solar projects are a critical component to meeting Maryland's climate goals and targets because they provide renewable energy to families and building owners that cannot otherwise install or afford solar energy and because such projects increase the amount of clean, renewable energy on the grid. This bill would more than double the allowable generating capacity of community solar projects by increasing the current cap from 2 megawatts to 5 megawatts.

Anyone who receives an electric bill can benefit from community solar including renters, residents in multi-unit buildings, municipalities, nonprofits and businesses that don't own their roofs. Community solar succeeds in delivering clean, renewable energy and typically does so at costs less than standard offer service rates.

Further, many community solar projects are designed for low and moderate income households and deliver the energy at rates 20 - 25% below utilities standard offer rates. Thus, community solar is a significant aspect of energy justice for these families.

Energy is also a substantial cost for building owners and managers, so the availability of low cost community solar is an important means of preserving affordable housing.

In short, increasing the generating capacity of community solar projects is good for the environment and good for families.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report for HB440.

## **MLC Climate Justice Wing:**

Assateague Coastal Trust  
Maryland Legislative Coalition  
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights  
Chesapeake Climate Action Network  
WISE  
Frack Free Frostburg  
Mountain Maryland Movement  
Clean Water Action  
Howard County Indivisible  
Howard County Sierra Club  
Columbia Association Climate Change and Sustainability Advisory Committee  
HoCo Climate Action  
CHEER  
Climate XChange - Maryland  
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/  
National Parks Conservation Association  
350 Montgomery County  
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization  
The Climate Mobilization Montgomery County  
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions  
Montgomery Countryside Alliance  
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church  
Environmental Justice Ministry  
Coalition For Smarter Growth  
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County  
MCPS Clean Energy Campaign  
MoCo DCC  
Potomac Conservancy  
Casa de Maryland

Nuclear Information & Resource Service  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
Laurel Resist  
Greenbelt Climate Action Network  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative  
Ministry of Maryland  
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs  
Wicomico NAACP  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Chispa MD  
Climate Law & Policy Project  
Maryland Poor People's Campaign  
Labor Network for Sustainability  
The Nature Conservancy  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
350 Baltimore  
Maryland Environmental Health Network  
Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis  
Talbot Rising  
Adat Shalom Climate Action  
Mid-Atlantic Earth Holders  
Climate Parents of Prince Georges  
Echotopia  
Maryland NAACP State Conference,  
Environmental Justice Committee