



SB 256- SUPPORT
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**SB 256 Support
Expanding Clean Energy Microgrids
For Low and Moderate Income Communities**

**Finance Committee
February 3rd, 2022**

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee:

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. As soon as the power went out, (write the story here as you told me! It was so powerful. About 3 to 4 sentences is good).

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 SB 256.