

January 29, 2021

Mr. Andrew Johnston  
Executive Secretary  
Maryland Public Service Commission  
6 St. Paul Street, 16<sup>th</sup> floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: RM 56 to COMAR 20.62 – Community Solar Energy Generation Systems (CSEGS)  
*Response to the Petition of the Coalition for Community Solar Access, Maryland-DC-Delaware-Virginia Solar Energy Industries Association, and the Low and Moderate Income Advocates (Joint Petitioners) to Increase the Annual Caps on the Program Capacity for the Community Solar Pilot Program and Make Other Changes to that Program*

The Advocates for Herring Bay (AHB)<sup>1</sup> strongly support measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in a comprehensive and holistic manner. Those measures include a complete transition of our electricity sector to clean energy. A community solar program, such as Maryland’s pilot program, can be a valuable tool in that effort. We believe that this state initiative will be most effective and equitable if it promotes a diverse portfolio of solar resources and deploys incentives where needed most.

Based on our review of Maryland’s CSEGS Systems pilot program, we recommend the Public Service Commission (“the Commission”) postpone action on the Joint Petitioners’ request to increase the net metering capacity allocated to this program. We believe any increase should be considered only if the Commission also adopts reforms that will strengthen protections for the state’s ecological assets, increase the diversity of siting and job opportunities of CSEGS projects, and better serve the public interest by directing financial incentives, such as full net metering rates, to projects that require those payments to be economically viable.

### **Policy Concerns**

Decarbonizing Maryland’s electricity supply will require huge investments of capital and resources. Because those costs will ultimately be borne by Maryland residents, AHB urges the Commission to be judicious in the way it invests ratepayer resources for new generation capacity. In our view, public support should be channeled to projects that will generate electricity in a manner that:

1. avoids the loss or degradation of publicly beneficial ecosystem services, including reducing air and water pollution, providing wildlife habitat, and naturally sequestering carbon;
2. ensures geographic diversity in siting and job creation benefits, including diversity across urban, suburban, and rural communities; and
3. depends on the full value of any state subsidies—including net metering payments—to be economically viable.

Applying those criteria to the CSEGS program raises questions about whether the program should be expanded in its current form. As shown in Attachment A, the projects planned in the BGE/Pepco areas over the 2017-2020 period have considerable environmental impact and limited geographic diversity. Over 70 percent are ground-mounted systems being built on farms and forests, referred to here as

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<sup>1</sup> The Advocates for Herring Bay, Inc. is a community-based environmental group in Anne Arundel County.

“greenfield” projects. At least four of those are on forested parcels with average ecosystem services values of over \$1,500 per acre per year<sup>2</sup>. Several other parcels include highly valued forested areas, posing a risk to the public’s ecological services unless the panels are installed on less sensitive portions of the property (see Attachment B). Because the CSEGS program emphasizes greenfield projects, construction has been concentrated in rural areas and has spread jobs and impacts unevenly across jurisdictions.

Changing market conditions also raise questions about whether it is necessary to continue providing full net metering payments for some types of solar projects. According to the National Renewable Energy Lab, the levelized costs of ground-mounted systems have declined by about 35 percent since 2015 and commercial rooftop technologies by 25 percent.<sup>3</sup> As shown in Attachment C, our review of industry reports on solar costs suggests that small-scale greenfield generation is very likely profitable at prices well below the state’s net metering rate.

By contrast, generation costs are somewhat higher for solar systems on buildings, landfills and brownfields, and for elevated systems over parking lots or farms. Applying net metering payments to those types of projects directly affects their economic viability. Financial support for such projects also expands generation from sites with fewer environmental impacts and greater locational diversity.

## **Policy Considerations**

Before expanding the net metering capacity allocated for CSEGS projects, we think it is important to ask how and where the additional capacity will be built. As shown in Attachment D, there is a sizable gap between the capacity currently planned in individual counties and the amounts that would need to be built under the Joint Petitioners’ request. Many of Maryland’s urban and suburban jurisdictions, including our county of Anne Arundel, favor technologies that will allow us to expand solar generation without exacerbating development pressures or threatening valuable ecosystem services or agricultural productivity. Creating jobs and providing access to solar energy in underserved communities is another goal that may be better served by installing solar in the “built” environment where people live.

Other states have shown it can be done. New Jersey’s entire allocation for community solar was filled by projects on alternative surfaces after the state adopted various procedural and pricing incentives. Massachusetts has diversified its solar supply, in part by adopting solar pricing policies that “add” a premium for projects on preferred sites and “subtract” specified amounts from the price received for solar electricity generated on greenfield sites. New York also has been proactive in adopting incentives for using previously developed surfaces. Attachment E provides examples of such state policies.

## **Policy Options**

In our view, leveraging public resources for projects that dovetail with environmental and equity goals would expedite and expand—not delay or contract—the amount of solar capacity that could be built over the next few years. While Maryland lags behind its peers in providing a statutory framework for diversifying in-state generation, we believe the Commission could adopt procedural and pricing reforms that would enhance the public value of CSEGS projects. To assist in that effort, we have developed illustrative regulatory language for addressing three policy goals:

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<sup>2</sup> Estimates of ecosystem services values for those forested parcels are based on data and analysis on the Maryland Department of Natural Resources’ Greenprint GIS (<https://geodata.md.gov/greenprint/>) for a sample of 23 CSEGS greenfield projects, which represented about half of projects planned over the 2017-2020 period in the BGE/Pepco areas.

<sup>3</sup> See National Renewable Energy Lab, Annual Technology Baseline—2020, <https://atb.nrel.gov/>.

1. Reduce risks to ecosystem services. As shown in Attachment F, possible options include:
  - a. creating a two-track application process, one for projects that would not impact land with high ecosystem services value and one for projects that would. This option would give priority to projects with little or no impact on ecosystem services by continuing to process them on a first-come-first-served basis, only allowing high-impact projects in the queue on a space available basis at the end of each year. This is a simplified version of New Jersey’s ranking system; and/or
  - b. assessing an annual fee per kilowatt-hour (kwh) per acre for occupying lands with high ecosystem services value, which would be akin to the Massachusetts “subtractor.”
2. Ensure geographic diversity. As shown in Attachment G, one way to diversify siting and job opportunities across urban, suburban, and rural locations would be to increase the amount of capacity allocated to the Small, Brownfield, Other category. The option presented here would gradually increase that share from the current 30 percent to 35 percent in 2022, 40 percent in 2023, and 45 percent in 2024.
3. Target net metering benefits to the need for a subsidy. As shown in Attachment H, one option would be to create a pilot program that would make admission into the program queue contingent on a competitive bidding process that returns a portion of any unneeded subsidy to non-subscribers. We suggest using this pilot program for the “Open” category because of the favorable economics of greenfield projects.

In addition, we recommend that the Commission, by rule or administrative action, require applicants to provide statistical data and GIS profiles that document the geographic and environmental characteristics of proposed projects (see Attachment I). Such profiles will help policymakers and developers flag potential issues early in the process, enhance the transparency of the program, and help the Commission conduct the analyses needed for its statutorily required assessment of the pilot program.

## Summary

The Advocates for Herring Bay support expanding solar capacity to meet Maryland’s clean energy goals, but we believe those ambitious goals can only be met if public resources are deployed in the most effective and equitable manner possible. On balance, we believe it is in the public interest for the Commission to postpone action on the Joint Petitioners’ request to expand the size of the CSEGS program unless the Commission concurrently adopts changes to address the environmental, economic, and geographic diversity issues raised in this letter. Thank you for considering our views.

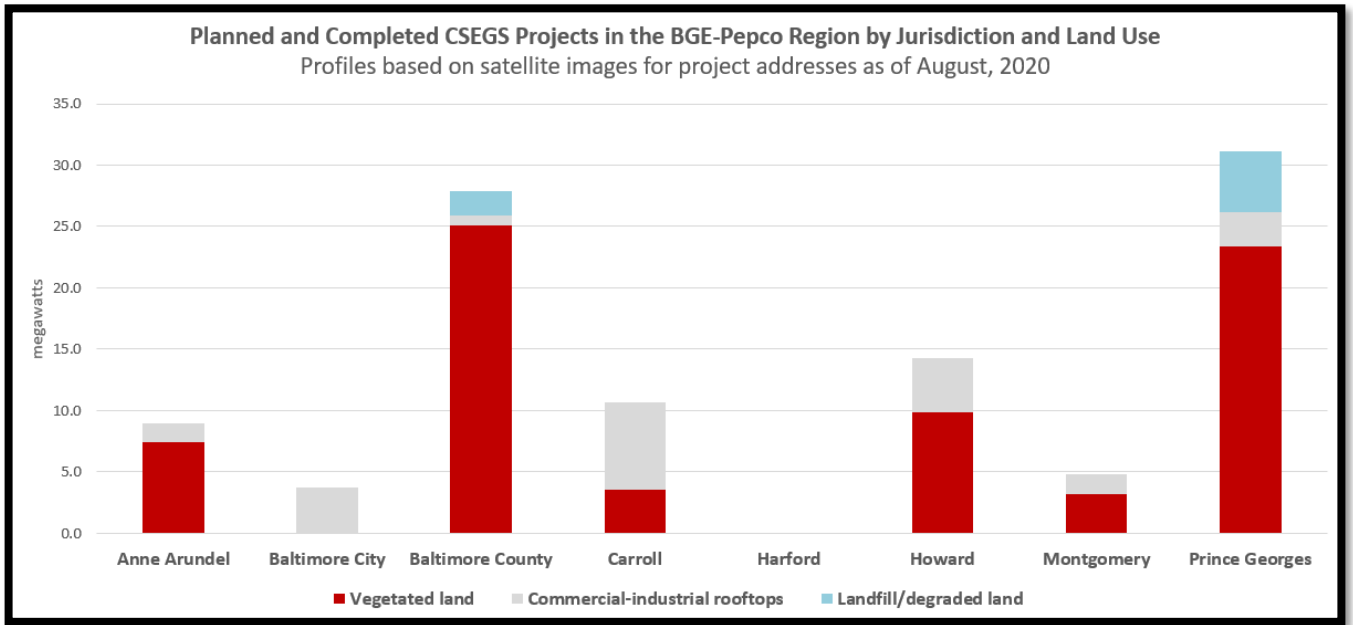
Stephen Marley  
Policy Coordinator  
Advocates for Herring Bay

Attachments

## List of Attachments

- A. Distribution of CSEGS Projects in BGE/Pepco Area by Jurisdiction and Land Use
- B. Examples of Ecosystem Values for Selected CSEGS sites
- C. Illustrative Estimates of Levelized Cost of Generating Electricity from Small-Scale Solar Projects
- D. Estimated Acreage Needed in BGE/Pepco Area to Support Proposed Expansion
- E. Examples of Pricing Differentials Used in Massachusetts and New Jersey
- F. Options for Reducing Risks to Ecosystem Services
- G. Option for Increasing Geographic Diversity and Employment Opportunities
- H. Option for Targeting Net Metering Benefit to Projects that Need Subsidies to be Economic
- I. Option for Enhancing Transparency, Project Review, and Statutory Study on Pilot Program

Attachment A  
 Distribution of CSEGS Projects Planned Through 2020 in BGE/Pepco Service Areas





Attachment B

Examples of ecosystems values for selected CSEGS sites

Page 1 of 2

Source of images: Maryland DNR Greenprint

## Example of Forested CSEGS Site

This site also is in a Targeted Ecological Area

**Aerial View**



**DNR Ecosystems Values**

**Green – higher than \$900/acre**



## Example of CSEGS Site With Varied Ecosystems Value

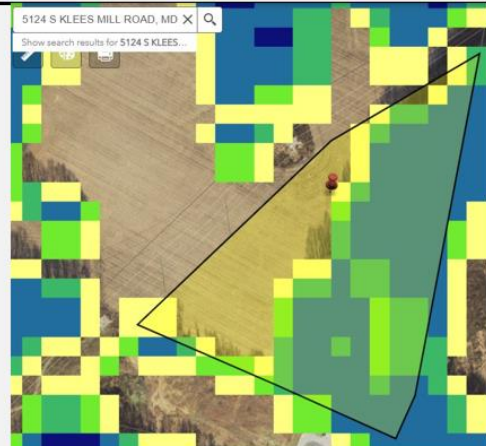
Net impact would depend on panel location

**Aerial View**

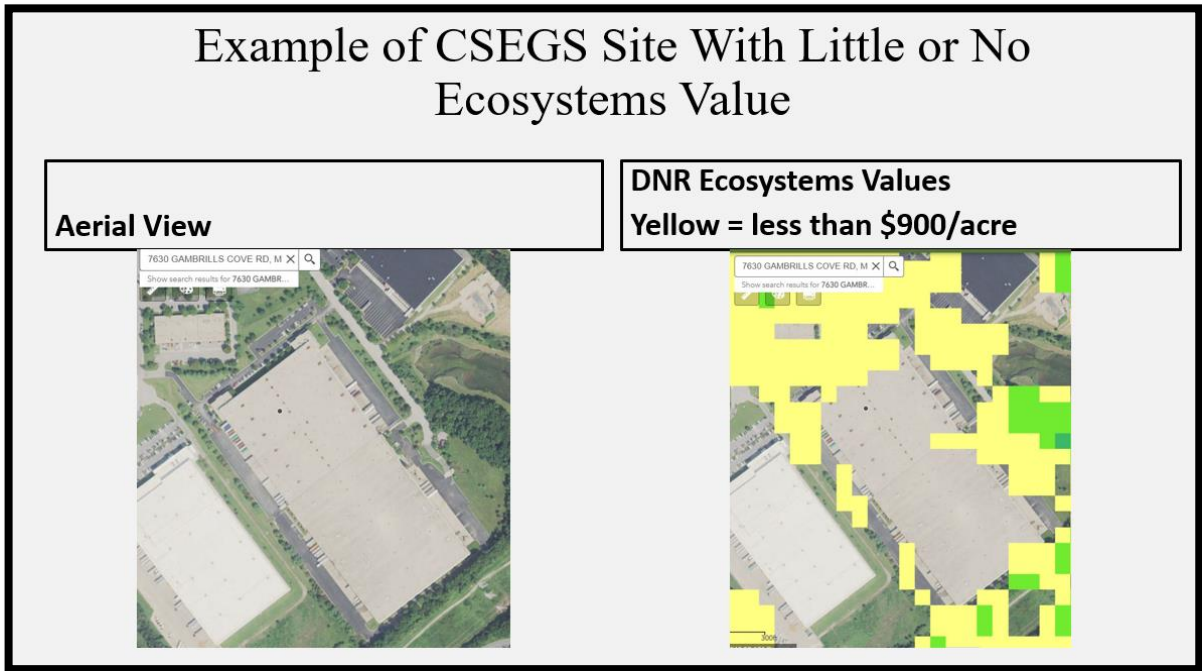


**DNR Ecosystems Values**

**Green/blue = higher than \$900/acre**



Attachment B  
 Examples of ecosystems values for selected CSEGS sites  
 Page 2 of 2



**Illustrative matrix of factors that affect ecosystem service values<sup>4</sup>:**

Accounting for Maryland's Ecosystem Services

Table 1. Ecosystem services in Maryland.\*

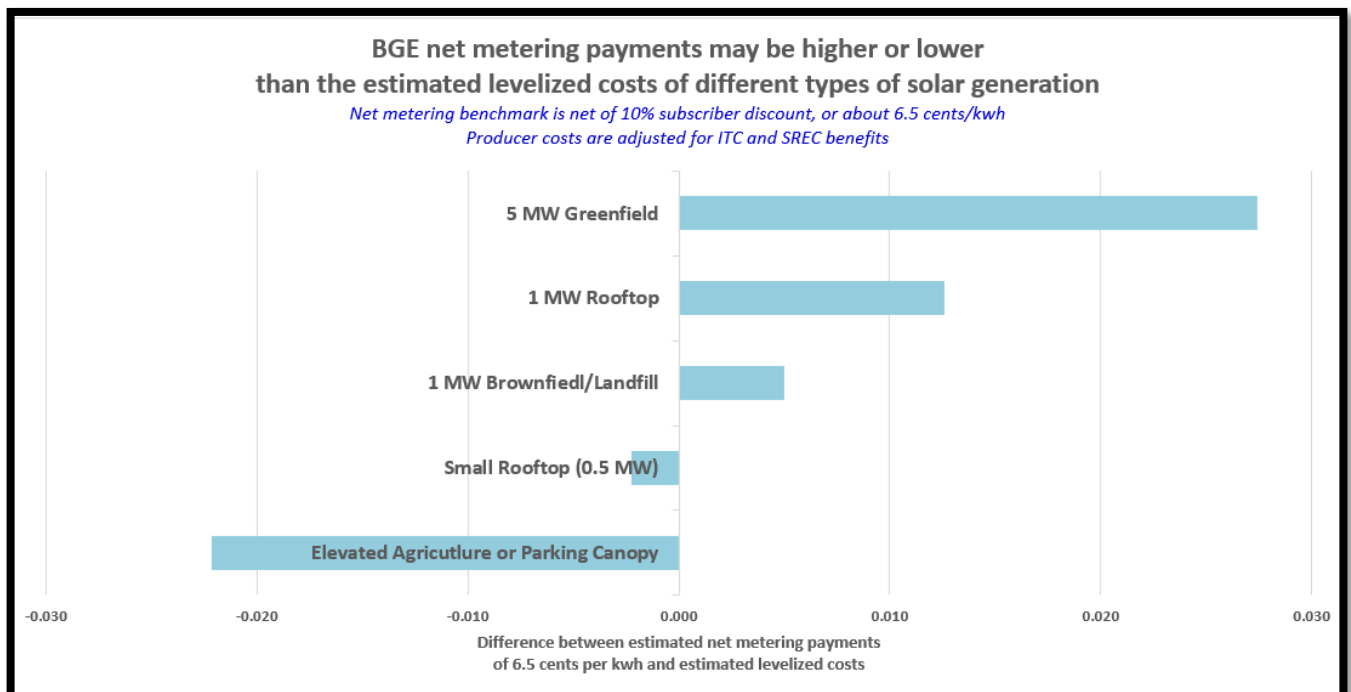
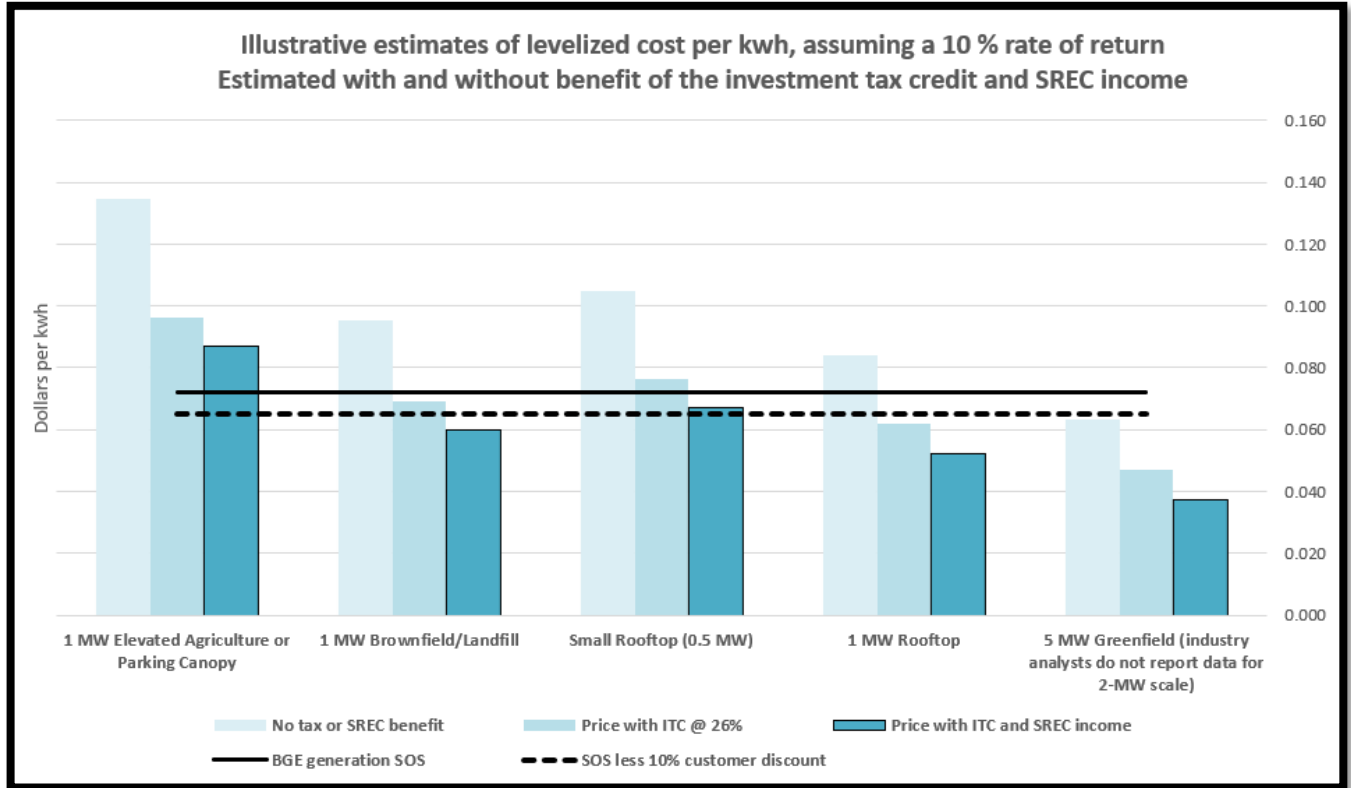
Ecosystem Service	Forest	Freshwater Wetlands	Coastal Wetlands	Chesapeake Bay	Crop Agriculture
Reduce Stormwater Runoff	+	+			+
Control Flooding		+	+		+
Recharge Groundwater	-	+			+/-
Uptake Nutrients	-	+	+		
Reduce Air Pollutants	+				
Sequester Carbon	+	+	+	+	+/-
Wildlife Habitat	-	+	+	+	
Food Provision	-			+	+
Recreation	+	+	+	+	
Timber	-				

\*The + symbol indicates that the ecosystem type provides the service, the +/- symbol indicates that the system can either have a positive or negative effect on the service.

<sup>4</sup> For more information about Maryland's assessment of ecosystem services values, see <https://dnr.maryland.gov/ccs/Pages/Ecosystem-Services.aspx>

Attachment C  
 Illustrative Estimates of the Levelized Cost of Generating Electricity from Small-Scale Projects  
 Page 1 of 2

For background on estimating assumptions, see page 2 of attachment





Attachment C  
 Overview of Parameters Used for Illustrative Estimates of Levelized Costs  
 Page 2 of 2

**Table 1. Parameters Used for Illustrative Estimates of Levelized Cost per kilowatt-hour (kwh)**

These estimates are meant to represent a range of possible costs for different types of solar projects. Actual costs will vary, and are particularly sensitive to the financial terms, such as the mix of debt and equity, the desired rate of return, and net tax rates.

<b>Financial Parameters</b>		<b>Estimated SREC value for 2022-2024 cohort</b>			
Debt	60%	Avg.nominal Alt. Compliance Pmt	0.026		
Equity	40%	Est gross nominal SREC avg/kwh	0.020		
Borrowing rate	5%	NPV of avg/kwh	0.016		
Gross federal/state tax rate	40%	After tax NPV, avg/kwh	0.009		
Annual inflation	2.25%				
After tax internal rate of return	10%	ITC for 2022-2024 projects	26%		

<b>Technical Parameters</b>	Greenfield	Commercial Rooftop	Landfill/ Brownfield	Elevated
MW	5	1	0.5	1
Capacity Factor*	21%	18%	16%	18%
Project Life	25	25	25	25
Capex/kw	1,350	1,600	1,800	2,700
Fixed O&M/kw	16	15	15	15

\* Maryland's 2019 report on a renewable energy standard assumed factors of 25% for greenfield to 18% for distributed solar. This estimate uses somewhat lower rates for CSEGS and small rooftops to account for design uncertainties at their smaller size.

**Table 2. Ratio of Estimated Levelized Cost per kwh to BGE Generation Subscriber Credit**

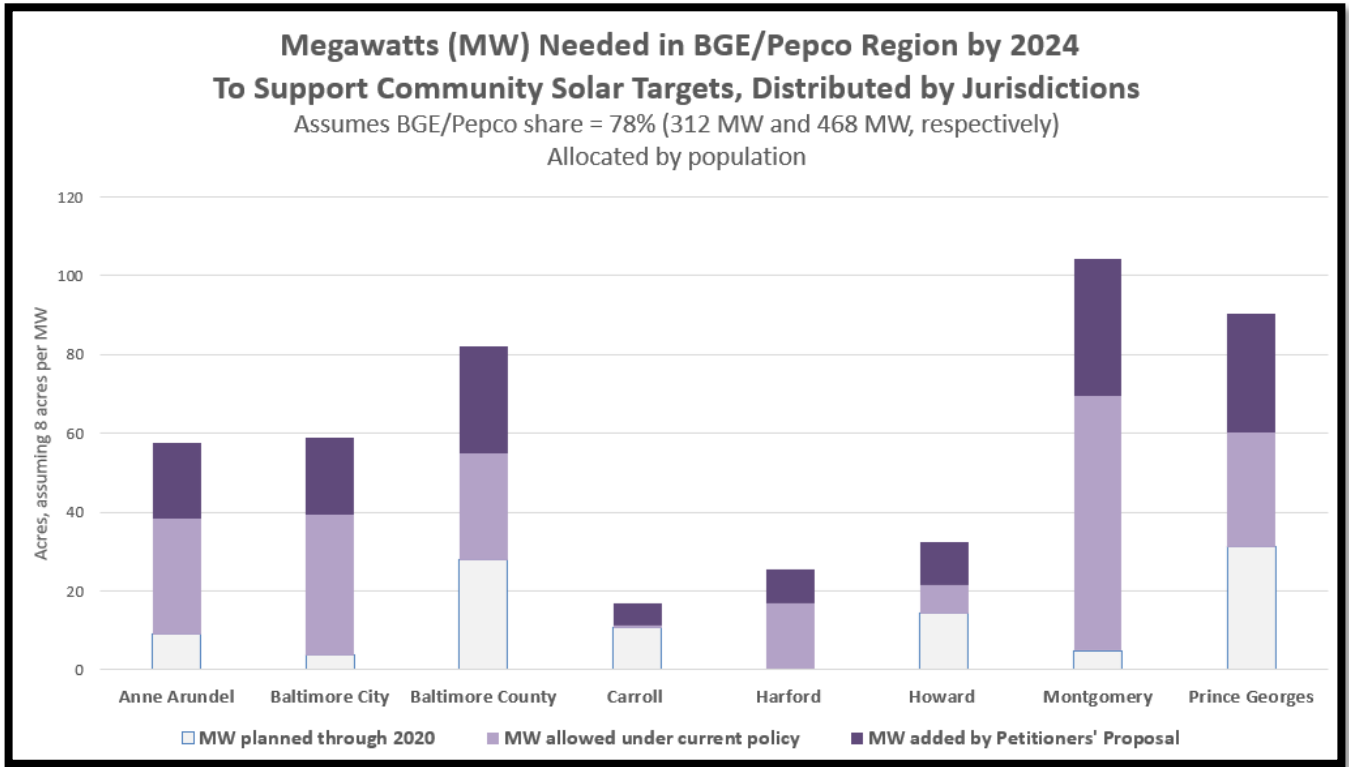
<b>BGE Standard Offer of Service (dollars per kwh)</b>	0.072			
Est, Subscriber discount	10%			
Est generation CSEGS benchmark	0.065			

<b>Cost as % CSEGS benchmark</b>	Greenfield	Commercial Rooftop	Landfill/ Brownfield	Elevated
MW	5	1	0.5	1
Levelized cost without ITC or SREC	97%	130%	162%	207%
Levelized cost with ITC	72%	95%	118%	148%
Levelized cost with ITC and SREC	58%	81%	103%	134%

Primary sources: Publicly available information published by Lazard, Energy Information Administration, National Renewable Energy Lab, Wood Mackenzie, and the States of Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Jersey.

Attachment D  
 Estimated Acreage Needed in BGE/Pepeco Region to Support Proposed Expansion  
 Allocated by Population by Jurisdiction



Attachment E  
Examples of Pricing Differentials Used in Massachusetts and New Jersey  
Page 1 of 3

Massachusetts: Land-Use Adders and Subtractors as of 2020

For more information on the Massachusetts program see [MA Pricing Regulations](#) and [MA 2020 Guidelines](#)

Summary of Compensation Rate Adder Values by Type and Adder Tranche										
Adder Type <sup>1</sup>	Generation Unit Type	Adder Tranche and Value (\$/kWh) <sup>2</sup>								
		Adder Tranche 1 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 2 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 3 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 4 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 5 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 6 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 7 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 8 (80 MW)	Adder Tranche 9 (80 MW)
Location Based	Building Mounted Solar Tariff Generation Unit									\$0.01920
	Floating Solar Tariff Generation Unit									\$0.03000
	Solar Tariff Generation Unit on a Brownfield									\$0.03000
	Solar Tariff Generation Unit on an Eligible Landfill									\$0.04000
	Canopy Solar Tariff Generation Unit									\$0.06000
	Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Unit									\$0.06000
Off-taker Based	Low Income Property Solar Tariff Generation Unit	\$0.03000	\$0.02880	\$0.02765	\$0.02654	\$0.02548	\$0.02446	\$0.02348	\$0.02254	
	Low Income Community Shared Solar Tariff Generation Unit	\$0.06000	\$0.05760	\$0.05530	\$0.05308	\$0.05096	\$0.04892	\$0.04697	\$0.04509	
	Public Entity Solar Tariff Generation Unit	\$0.04000	\$0.03840	\$0.03686	\$0.03539	\$0.03397	\$0.03261	\$0.03131	\$0.03006	
Energy Storage <sup>3</sup>	Energy Storage Adder	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable	
Solar Tracking	Solar Tracking Adder	\$0.01000	\$0.00960	\$0.00922	\$0.00885	\$0.00849	\$0.00815	\$0.00783	\$0.00751	
Pollinator Adder	Pollinator Adder	\$0.00250	\$0.00240	\$0.00230	\$0.00221	\$0.00212	\$0.00204	\$0.00196	\$0.00188	

**b) Greenfield Subtractor**

Pursuant to 225 CMR 20.07(4)(g), a STGU that falls under Category 2 or Category 3 has an associated Greenfield Subtractor applied to the STGU's Base Compensation Rate.

**Before the Publication Date, Greenfield Subtractors apply as follows:**

Category 1 Agricultural and Non-Agricultural:	No Greenfield Subtractor
Category 2 Land Use:	\$0.0005/kWh per acre impacted
Category 3 Land Use:	\$0.001/kWh per acre impacted

**After the Publication Date, Greenfield Subtractors apply as follows:**

Category 1 Agricultural and Non-Agricultural:	No Greenfield Subtractor
Category 2 Land Use:	\$0.00125/kWh per acre impacted
Category 3 Land Use:	\$0.0025/kWh per acre impacted

Pursuant to 225 CMR 20.07(4)(g), the value of the total Greenfield Subtractor applied to a STGU is measured as the acreage of land that a STGU occupies, which is calculated by measuring the square footage of the solar photovoltaic modules.

Attachment E  
 Examples of Pricing Differentials Used in Massachusetts and New Jersey  
 Page 2 of 3

New Jersey Price Differentials for “TREC” Prices

For information on New Jersey’s current pricing differentials for preferred sites, see [NJ Frequently Asked Questions](#) numbers 31-33.

The TREC factors are defined based on the chart below:

<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Factor</b>
Subsection (t): landfill, brownfield, areas of historic fill	1.0
Grid supply (Subsection (r)) rooftop	1.0
Net metered non-residential rooftop and carport	1.0
Community solar	0.85
Grid supply (Subsection (r)) ground mount	0.6
Net metered residential ground mount	0.6
Net metered residential rooftop and carport	0.6
Net metered non-residential ground mount	0.6



Attachment E  
 Examples of Pricing Differentials Used in Massachusetts and New Jersey  
 Page 3 of 3

New Jersey Community Solar Ranking Criteria

For more information on New Jersey’s 2019 ranking criteria, see [NJ 2019 ranking criteria](#).

Evaluation Criteria	Max. Points
<b>Low- and Moderate-Income and Environmental Justice Inclusion</b> Higher preference: LMI project	30
<b>Siting</b> Higher preference: landfills, brownfields, areas of historic fill, rooftops, parking lots, parking decks Medium preference: canopies over impervious surfaces (e.g. walkway), areas designated in need of redevelopment No Points: preserved lands, wetlands, forested areas, farmland  Bonus points for: landscaping, land enhancement, pollination support, stormwater management, soil conservation	20      Max. possible bonus points: 5
<b>Product Offering</b> Higher preference: guaranteed savings >10%, flexible terms* Medium preference: guaranteed savings >5% No Points: no guaranteed savings, no flexible terms*  *Flexible terms may include: no cancellation fee, short-term contract	15
<b>Community and Environmental Justice Engagement</b> Higher preference: partnership with municipality, partnership with local community organization(s), partnership with affordable housing provider Medium preference: letter of support from municipality, project owner is a government and/or public and/or quasi-public entity, project owner is an affordable housing developer	10
<b>Subscribers</b> Higher preference: more than 51% project capacity is allocated to residential subscribers	10
<b>Other Benefits</b> Higher preference: Provides local jobs/job training, demonstrates co-benefits (e.g. paired with storage, micro-grid project, energy audit, EE measures)	10
<b>Geographic Limit within EDC service territory</b> Higher preference: municipality/adjacent municipality Medium preference: county/adjacent county No Points: any geographic location within the EDC service territory.	5

Attachment F  
Options for Reducing the Risk of Losing or Degrading Ecosystem Services  
Page 1 of 3

**Option 1: Create a two-track application process**

Projects affecting land with little or no ecosystem value would continue to be processed on a first-come-first-served basis. Projects occupying land with high ecosystem services value would be processed at the end of each year.

Text change: Create new project categories and modify the sequencing of applications in program queue

20.62.03.01

**.01 Customer Eligibility.**

A. CSEGS Location....

**E. Geographic Categories.**

Beginning on January 1, 2022, the Commission shall assign each application to one of the following project categories, consistent with the category definitions in 20.62.02.02.A.(3):

- (1) Small, Brownfield, Other category:
  - (a) located on surfaces or land with no or modest ecosystems services value; or
  - (b) located on surfaces or lands with high ecosystem services value.
- (2) Low and Moderate Income category:
  - (a) located on surfaces or lands with no or modest ecosystem services value; or
  - (b) located on surfaces or lands with high ecosystem services value.
- (3) Open category:
  - (a) located on lands with no or modest ecosystem services value; or
  - (b) located on surfaces or lands with high ecosystem services value

20.62.03.04

**.04 Pilot Program Queue.**

A. Electric Company Application Process.

~~(1) An electric company shall process applications filed under Regulation .03 of this chapter in the order in which the electric company receives the application.~~

(1) Beginning on January 1, 2022, an electric company shall process applications filed under Regulation .03 of this chapter in the following order:

- (a) Projects assigned to categories (1)(a), (2)(a) and (3)(a) under 20.62.03.02.E shall be processed in the order in which the electric company receives the application.
- (b) Projects assigned to other categories under 20.62.03.02.E shall be processed at the end of each year and may be accepted into the program only to the extent that capacity will not be used for projects in categories (1)(a), (2)(a), and (3)(a).



Attachment F  
Options for Reducing the Risk of Losing or Degrading Ecosystem Services  
Page 2 of 3

**Option 2: Assess an annual fee on electricity generated on land occupying or impacting lands with high ecosystem services value\***

Text change: insert new language. See technical note below.

20.62.03.09

**.09 Value Adjustment Fee.**

- (1) By January 1, 2022, the Commission shall establish the value of a Value Adjustment fee that is:
  - (a) expressed in dollars per kilowatt hour per year per acre of land with high ecosystem services value;
  - (b) based on the estimates of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources of the monetary value of lands with high ecosystem services value; and
  - (c) updated annually for new information from the Department of Natural Resources on ecosystem services values.
  
- (2) Beginning on January 1, 2022, and each year thereafter, an electric company shall:
  - (a) require applicants to identify and quantify the amount of acreage with high ecosystem services value that would be occupied or impacted by a proposed CSEGS project;
  - (b) collect a Value Adjustment fee from a subscriber organization equal to fee per kwh per year established under (1)(b) and applied per acre of land with high ecosystem services value occupied or impacted by the CSEGS project; and
  - (c) shall ~~pass the~~ use income received from the fees to offset pilot program costs ~~the utilities' customers~~, subject to procedures approved by the Commission.
  
- (3) Beginning on January 1, 2022 and each year thereafter, a subscriber organization shall:
  - (a) be obligated to pay a Value Adjustment fee to the electric company in the amount determined under (2)(b);
  - (b) remit the fees to the utility on a schedule determined by the Commission.

Technical note:

The value of the “subtractor” applied by the State of Massachusetts to greenfield projects was \$.0025 per kwh per acre in 2020.

Attachment F  
Policy Options for Reducing the Risk of Losing or Degrading Ecosystem Services  
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**Insert definitions of high and modest ecosystem services values**

Text change: Insert new definitions. See technical note below.

20.62.01.02

**.02 Definitions.**

A. In this subtitle the following terms have the meanings indicated.

B. Terms Defined

(25) **High Ecosystem Services Value:** means acreage that has been assigned a monetary value by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources equal to or greater \$900 per acre per year for ecosystem services (benefits to people derived from ecosystems), indexed to 2020 valuations and documented on geographic information systems maintained by the Department

(26) **Modest Ecosystem Services Value:** means acreage that has been assigned a monetary value by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources of less than \$900 per acre per year for ecosystem services (benefits to people derived from ecosystems), indexed to 2020 valuations and documented on geographic information systems maintained by the Department.

**Technical note:**

The measures of ecosystem services values shown in Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Greenprint GIS data base are reported in terms of values per 30 meter pixel. The \$900 per acre metric used in the proposed definitions is equivalent to \$200 per 30 meter pixel.

Attachment G  
Option for Increasing Geographic Diversity and Employment Opportunities

**Increase the capacity allocated to the Small, Brownfield, Other Category**

Text change: Insert supplemental text

20.62.02.02 Program Generation Capacity

**A. Capacity Limit**

(3) Program Categories

- (a) Small, Brownfield and Other Category (Small)—30 percent for years one through four, 35 percent for the fifth year, 40 percent for the sixth year, and 45 percent for the seventh year.
- (b) Open Category (Open) — 40 percent for years one through four, 35 percent for the fifth year, 30 percent for the sixth year, and 25 percent for the seventh year.
- (c) Low and Moderate Income Category (LMI) — 30 percent

Attachment H  
Option for Targeting Net Metering Benefit to Solar Technologies  
That Need a Subsidy to be Economic

**Use competitive auctions to return a portion of any unneeded subsidy to nonsubscribers**

Text change: insert new "C"

20.62.03.03

**.03 Pilot Project Application Process.**

**C. Pilot Program for Competitive Application Process.**

1. Applications received after December 31, 2021, for projects in the "Open" category shall be awarded through competitive auctions of certificates to participate in the program.
2. The Commission shall determine the basis of competitive bids, which may take the form of:
  - a. fees to be paid per kilowatt-hour of electricity generated by the project throughout the economic life of the project;
  - b. an upfront bonus payment; or
  - c. other methods of cash-based compensation specified by the Commission.
3. Auctions of certificates shall be conducted by the electric company:
  - a. on an annual basis;
  - b. in the form of sealed bids or other such method determined by the Commission;
  - c. subject to minimum bids, reserve prices, or other financial terms determined by the Commission;
  - d. subject to any payment or financial assurance conditions established by the Commission.
4. The electric company:
  - a. shall conduct auctions on an annual basis;
  - b. shall award certificates on the basis of the highest bids for the fees specified in C.2, subject to the requirements in 5;
  - c. is authorized to collect the fees from the subscriber organization for a project that is issued a participation certificate;
  - d. shall establish procedures for passing the income received from the fees to the utilities' customers, subject to approval by the Commission.
5. Subscriber organizations issued a certificate of participation shall:
  - a. enter into an agreement with the utility that obligates the subscriber organization to pay the fee;
  - b. provide the utility with any financial assurances required by the Commission;
  - c. be subject to late fees or other penalties as the Commission may determine appropriate, and
  - d. remit the fees to the utility on a schedule determined by the Commission;

Attachment I  
Option for Enhancing Transparency, Project Review, and Statutory Study on Pilot Program  
Page 1 of 2

**Require applicants to provide statistical data and GIS profiles of project**

Text Change; Insert new “D”

20.62.03.01

**.01 Customer Eligibility.**

**D. Required Information on Geographic Characteristics.**

(1) Applications for admission received after June 30, 2021 shall include a geographic profile that provides such information as the Commission may require on the location and characteristics of the surfaces that will be occupied or impacted by the CSEGS project.

(2) The geographic information shall include, at a minimum:

(a) Information on the location of the project, including but not limited to:

- (i) project address;
- (ii) city or county;
- (iii) zoning district;
- (iv) identification of all state property tax accounts affected by the project
- (v) parcel size;
- (vi) acreage occupied by the generation unit; and (vi) capacity in megawatts.

(b) Acreage statistics and an aerial map showing whether and how much of the acreage occupied by the project is located in whole or in part on a:

- (i) rooftop;
- (ii) canopy;
- (iii) landfill;
- (iv) brownfield;
- (v) reclaimed land subject to federal, state, or local regulation;
- (vi) man-made reservoir or waste-water utility facility;
- (vii) forest or woodlands;
- (viii) farmland;
- (ix) open space other than farmland;
- (x) wetlands or streams, including buffers; or
- (xi) other.

(c) Aerial maps with overlays showing whether and how much of the acreage occupied by the project is located in whole or in part on lands designated as:

- (i) Acreage with high ecosystem services value;

Continued on next page

Attachment I

Option for Enhancing Transparency, Project Review, and Statutory Study on Pilot Program  
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Continued:

- (ii) Acreage in other areas of special state interest, including but not limited to;
    - a. Targeted Ecological Areas;
    - b. Green Infrastructure Hubs or Corridors;
    - c. Resource Conservation Areas in the Critical Area;
  - (iii) Prime agricultural farmland; or
  - (iv) Other areas identified by the Commission.
- (3). Applicants shall:
- (a) prepare the report using statistics and maps published by the State of Maryland or applicable city or county; and
  - (b) concurrently transmit a copy of the report on geographic characteristics to the electric company
- (4). The electric company shall make a copy of the project's geographic characteristics publicly available on its website as soon as practical after the application is received.