

Testimony in Favor of Expedited Bill 27-25:

Hello Montgomery County Council,

Today we are testifying in favor of Bill 27-25, Environmental Sustainability - Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). We are the Montgomery County Junior Council, a county-wide student government association representing more than 35,000 middle school students across the county. As students, we already see the effects of climate change around us. This includes heat waves, poor air quality, and rising energy costs that impact our families. This bill is a chance to give our community more choice, transparency, and access to clean and affordable power.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our generation. Rising temperatures, air pollution, and increasing energy demand threaten public health, the environment, and local communities. Yet many residents and small businesses have little control over where their electricity comes from. Renewable energy options can seem confusing or too expensive, limiting access for people who want to make sustainable choices.

Introduced on July 15, this bill would establish a Community Choice Aggregation program within the Department of Environmental Protection. The CCA would allow Montgomery County to directly purchase electricity on behalf of residents and small businesses, prioritizing renewable sources like wind and solar.

Montgomery County has already committed to cutting emissions and protecting public health. But meeting those goals depends on the energy we use every day. Right now, renewable options can sometimes be inaccessible or expensive for individual residents. A CCA changes that by pooling buying power, negotiating better prices, and prioritizing clean energy.

This matters for three key reasons:

1. **Climate and Health Benefits:** Cleaner energy reduces pollution and protects the air we breathe. The County's own Climate Action Plan identifies the CCA as the most impactful way to reduce electricity-related emissions.
2. **Affordability and Stability:** Bulk purchasing makes renewable energy affordable and shields residents from unpredictable rate spikes.
3. **Community Trust and Transparency:** Regular reporting ensures decisions are made openly and reflect community priorities.

We also believe climate action is also about equity and opportunity. Many members of our community share stories of families wanting to switch to solar but

finding the costs too high. That raises an important question: “Why can’t clean energy be more accessible?” That question is so important because this bill is a step forward in making that possible. By letting the County choose cleaner, cheaper electricity, it removes barriers. Every resident, regardless of zip code, can benefit from more sustainable energy.

For these reasons, we urge the County Council to pass Bill 27-25.

Thank you,

Montgomery County Junior Council (MCJC)