



February 2026 Testimony to Montgomery County Council
On Bill 2-26,
On Green Bank

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez, Vice-President Balcombe, and Montgomery County Council Members,

Thank you very much. My name is Alex Stavitsky-Zeineddin, representing the Montgomery County Sierra Club.

The Sierra Club and its members appreciate your considering environmental concerns in considering Bill 2-26, which would allow the Montgomery County Green Bank to expand its investments to include more climate resiliency projects.

Although we see value in potentially broadening the Green Bank's investments to include resiliency projects, we have concerns because the combination of:

- A) persistent Green Bank under-funding, and
- B) the potentially spreading of Green Bank financing across a broader swath of projects could inadvertently lead to decreased investment for renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives.

We hope the legislation can be improved to the benefit of both renewable/energy efficiency projects and resiliency initiatives.

Current law mandates that 10% of the revenue received by the County from the fuel-energy tax must be appropriated to each year to the Montgomery County Green Bank. Even though that hasn't been maintained, the Green Bank has nevertheless helped generate hundreds of millions of dollars of project investments, the majority of which were from the private sector. As planned, investments made in – and by – the Green Bank have had a positive multiplier effect. That was a good theoretical start, and the Green Bank's existing work does finance important renewable energy and energy-efficiency initiatives. With more resources, it could do even more.

But precisely because this is revenue neutral, this bill does not actually help raise revenue – either public or private – for environmental causes.

We support resiliency projects, including increasing drainage capacity, protecting electrical systems in buildings, increasing tree canopy cover, adding early flood warning systems, and creating green infrastructure to better capture stormwater, as the bill's proponents suggest. This bill already has many proponents, including sponsors Councilmembers Glass, Friedson, and Leudke, and co-sponsors Balcombe, Jawando, Stewart, Katz, and Evans. It seems likely to pass. But it would be even better if it:

- A) increased Green Bank funding, and
- B) included provisions to measure its effects, to ensure that it doesn't inadvertently spread the butter too thin, by potentially robbing renewable energy and energy efficiency projects to fund important resiliency projects.

Thank you very much for your consideration.