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**Maryland Office of People's Counsel Testifies That Bill Allowing
Maryland Communities to Aggregate Customers Will
Benefit Consumers and the Environment**

(Feb. 18, 2021) – In testimony today in support of [Maryland House Bill 768](#), the Office of People's Counsel gave its enthusiastic endorsement for Community Choice Energy (CCE), a pilot program that would enable Montgomery County to serve as the provider of electricity and energy services for its residents. The pilot community aggregation program, OPC testified, would promote its goal of advancing residential customer interests in a cost-effective and environmentally friendly energy future.

“The CCE concept has tremendous potential to advance the consumer and environmental interests of residential customers in Montgomery County and the rest of Maryland,” said David S. Lapp, Acting People's Counsel. “The energy infrastructure of the future will include innovative distributed technologies and services, such as local and rooftop solar, energy efficiency, microgrids, energy storage, and demand aggregators. These innovations are – by their very nature – local. Local customer aggregation supports local accountability and empowers residential customers while creating possibilities for new services, jobs, and customer savings.”

OPC's testimony explained that the CCE program will promote better performance through competition. Community aggregation enables local governmental entities to compete for the provision of energy products and services for their citizens. Community aggregation

also can establish benchmarks that will place competitive pressure on Maryland energy companies to operate cost effectively and innovate in all of Maryland.

HB 768 also includes important protections to prevent any shifting of costs from customers participating in community aggregation to nonparticipating customers, according to OPC's testimony.

OPC identified several modifications to the bill that will help ensure its success. The full text of OPC's testimony, including its suggested improvements, is available [here](#).

The Maryland Office of People's Counsel is an independent state agency that represents Maryland's residential consumers of electric, natural gas, telecommunications, private water and certain transportation matters before the Public Service Commission, federal regulatory agencies and the courts.