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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

For Immediate Release

Maryland PSC Adopts Regulations for Community Solar Pilot Program

(BALTIMORE, MD—June 15, 2016) – The Maryland Public Service Commission has approved final regulations to establish a community solar pilot program in Maryland, with an emphasis on providing renewable energy benefits for low and moderate income customers. The regulations are expected to be published on July 8, 2016 in the *Maryland Register* and will become final 10 days later (July 18).

The regulations initiated from legislation (HB 1087) passed in the 2015 Maryland General Assembly session and signed by Governor Larry Hogan, and were considered in a rule making process docketed by the Commission as [RM56](#).

“This pilot program will implement the General Assembly’s desire to increase access to solar electricity for all Maryland ratepayers, especially low and moderate income customers,” said W. Kevin Hughes, PSC Chairman. “In addition, it will encourage private investment in Maryland’s solar industry and diversify the state’s energy resource mix to meet the state’s Renewable Portfolio Standard and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act goals.”

Under the proposed regulations, the three-year community solar pilot program will:

- Provide access to solar-generated electricity – in a manner similar to rooftop solar and net metering – for all Maryland customers without requiring property ownership;
- Incentivize solar companies to provide service to low- and moderate-income customers;
- Attract new investment in Maryland’s renewable infrastructure and green economy;

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- Allow renters to contract for solar energy with the same benefits as rooftop owners;
- Set aside program capacity for each area of the state with a statewide cap of over 200MW. About 60MW is set aside for projects focused on low and moderate income customers;
- Create separate program capacity for small systems and systems built on brownfields, parking lots, or industrial areas;
- Allow smaller and rural service territories to make use of existing solar facilities while encouraging construction of new systems in the urban and suburban areas of Maryland;
- Include significant consumer protections, including prohibition against unreasonable fees and clear contract disclosure requirements; and
- Allow the Commission Staff to collect data necessary data and study the impact on Maryland's electricity grid over the three-year pilot program.

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About the Public Service Commission:

The Maryland Public Service Commission regulates electric and gas utilities, telephone companies (land lines), certain water and sewer companies, passenger motor vehicle carriers for hire (sedans, limousines, buses, Uber, Lyft), taxicab companies (in Baltimore City and County, Cumberland and Hagerstown) and bay pilot rates.

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