



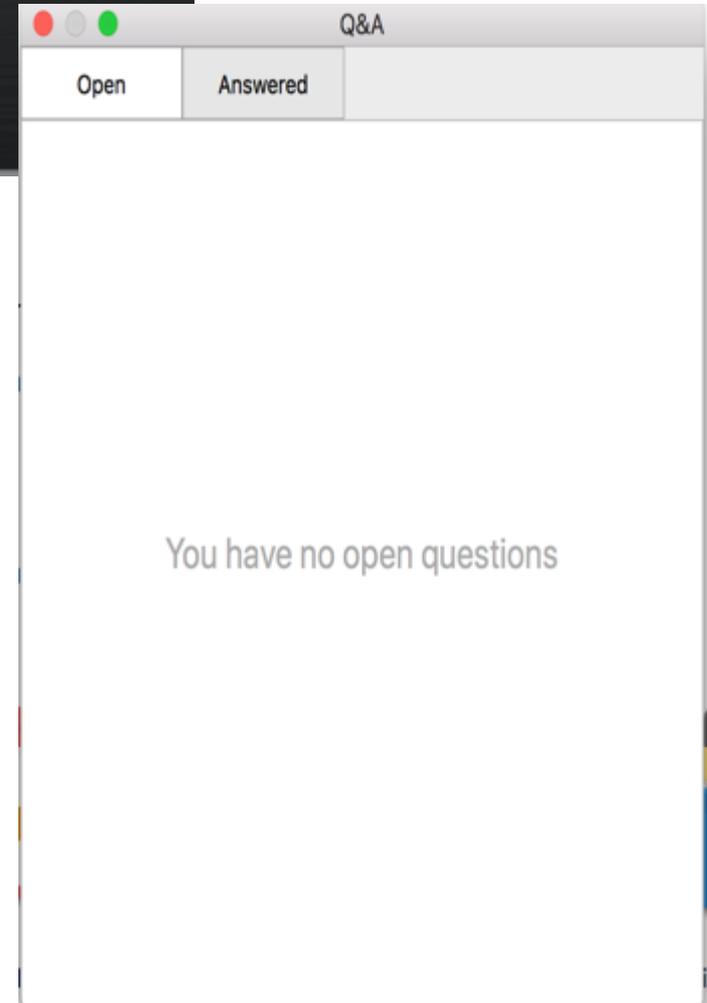
The Community Solar Opportunity



Housekeeping



- 40 minutes + Q&A
- Send questions via Q&A feature
- We'll post a recording + slides on our website



Overview

1. Who we are
2. Community solar basics
3. Maryland example
4. Making it happen

Who we are

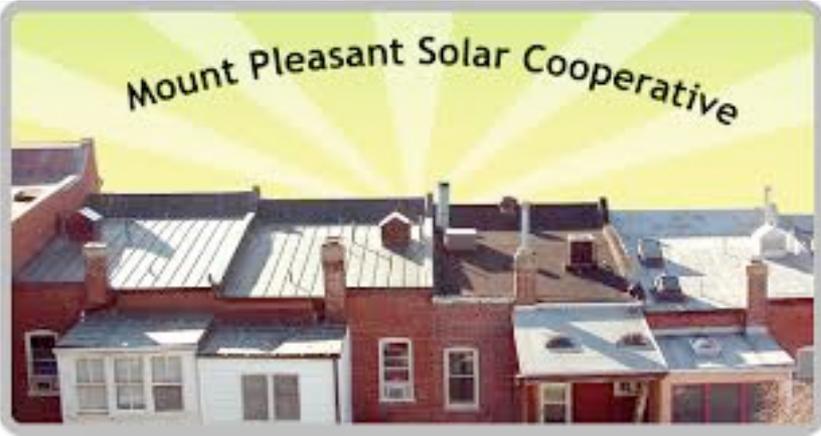


We are a network of people taking control of our energy by installing solar and generating our own electricity.

How we got started



Started in
2007 and it
wasn't easy!



Helping communities go solar



What makes a good roof for solar?

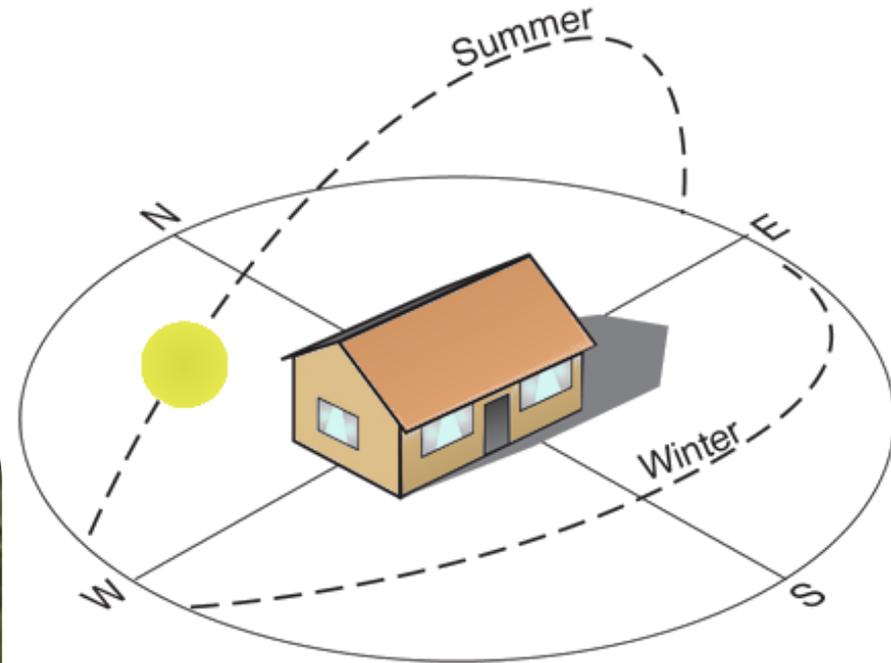


Image credit: solarenergy-usa.com

What makes a bad roof for solar?



A missed opportunity

National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) and the U.S. Department of Energy estimate that
48% of households and businesses across the nation can't go solar directly

<https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy15osti/63892.pdf>

What's the alternative?

What about people who can't put solar
where they are?

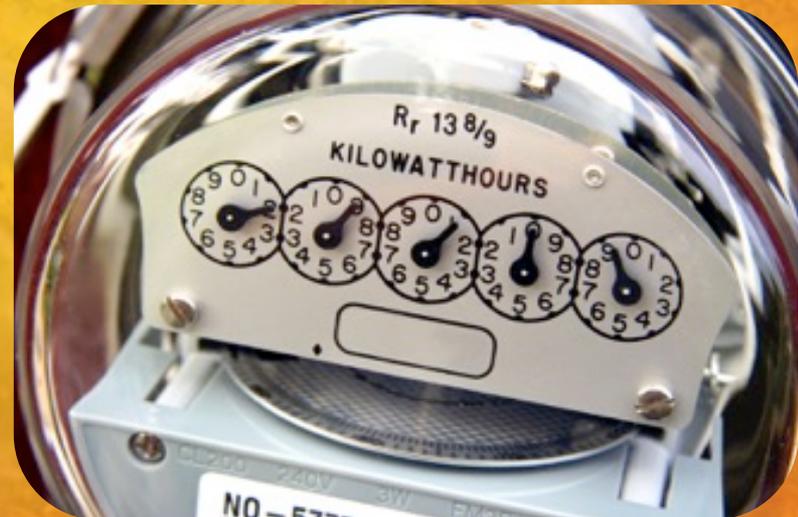


Image credit: Forbes.com

Sharing solar

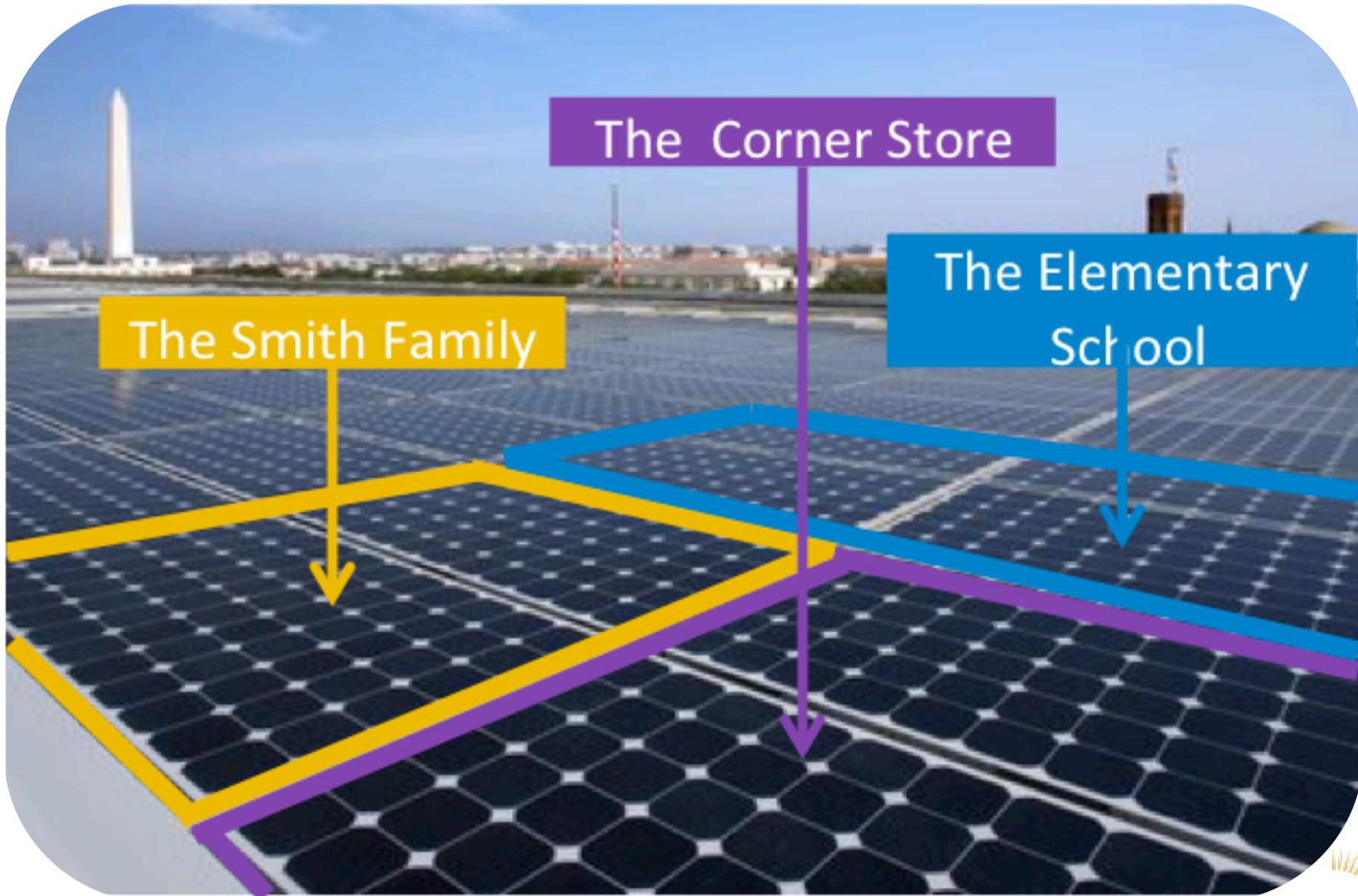


Photo credit: Vote Solar

What is community solar?

- “Community shared solar” or “solar gardens”
- Installed somewhere other than your property
- Proportional, not all or nothing
- Solar energy “virtually” credited to electric bill

Why community solar?

- Cheaper electricity now and/or in the future
- Fair access to solar for everyone
- Wider participation in our clean energy future
- Community-based power

Sharing benefits

Urban benefits

- Equity of access
- Equity of value



Photo credit: Joshua Peacock on Unsplash

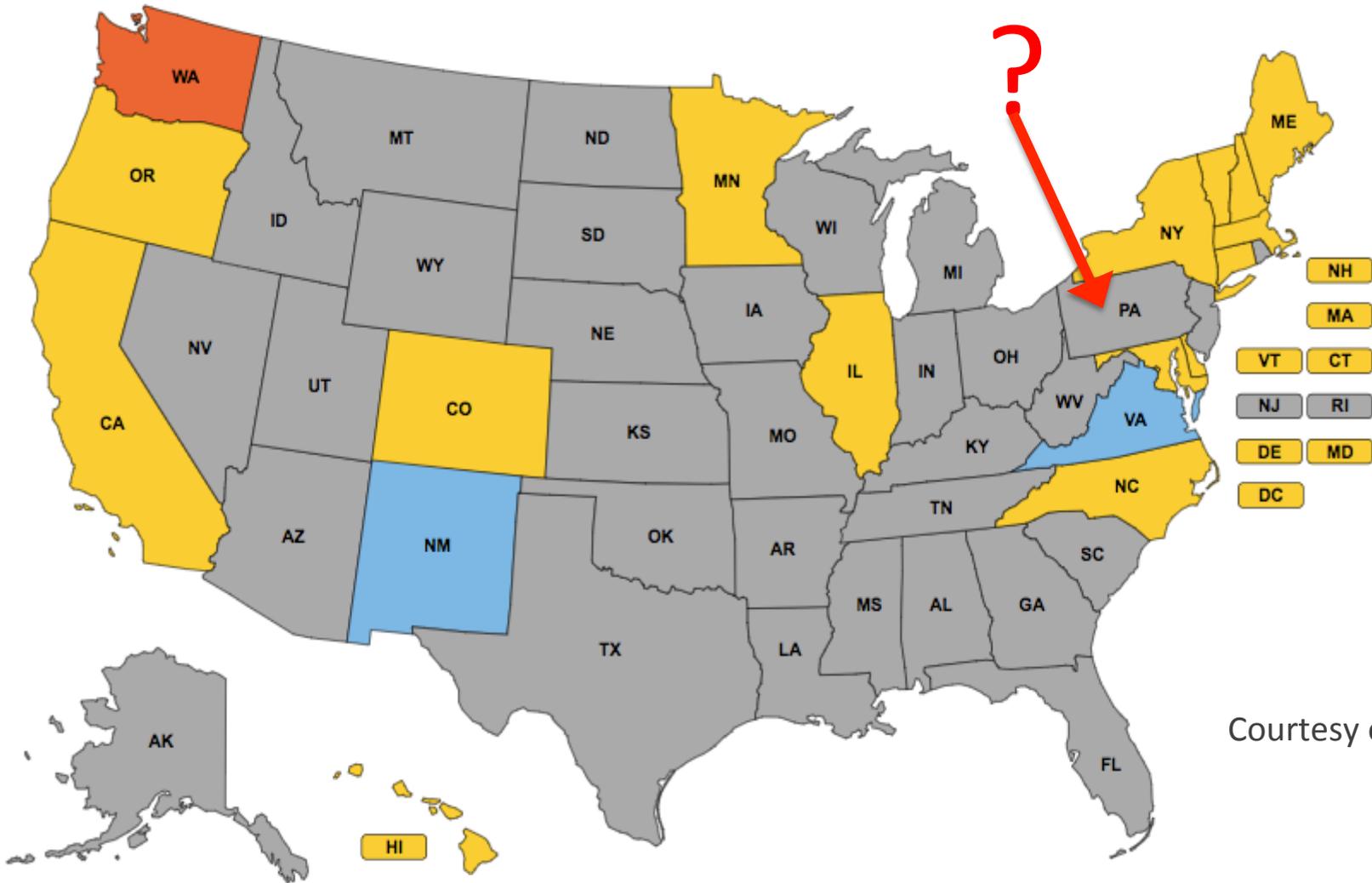


Photo credit: Fresh Energy

Rural benefits

- Urban benefits +
- Landholder revenue
- Tax revenue
- Pollinator support

A National Trend



Courtesy of Vote Solar

16 STATES & THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



Different types

Utility-owned

3rd party/competitive

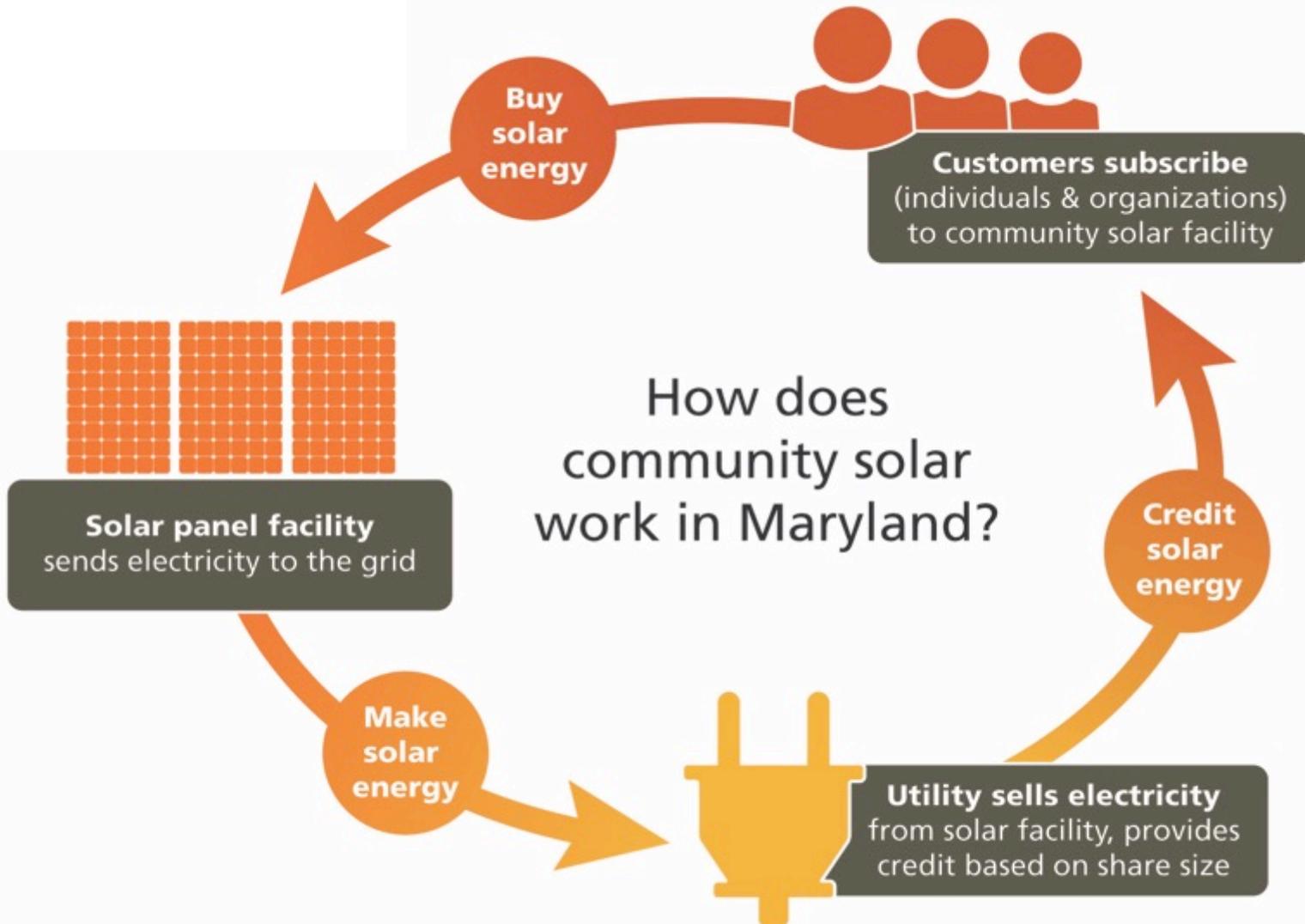
Bill Savings

Potential, not guaranteed

$\text{Savings} = \text{Difference}$
between retail rate and
solar credit rate

Example: Maryland

How it works in Maryland



How it works in Maryland

- Direct and third-party ownership permitted
- Full retail credit (just like rooftop solar)
- Subscription up to 200% of annual usage**
- Solar on site + community solar OK

~~** Excess is not the full retail value but just that of electricity generation costs~~

How it works in Maryland

Support for:

- Low and moderate income (LMI) access
- Small, non-traditional projects
- Geographic and siting diversity
- Clear consumer protection requirements

How it works in Maryland

Areas for improvement:

- Explicitly address financial access barriers
- It's a pilot with limited capacity
- System size is less than recommended 5MW
- Statewide outreach and education on zoning

How it works in Maryland

Community-driven Examples

We want clean
energy!



I need customers and a
location



I've got space!

Community solar is for everyone

Encouraging LMI participation:

- Reducing financing risk
- Consistent and broad consumer education
- Income verification requirements
- Maximize savings

What about Pennsylvania?

- Community solar needs *virtual net metering (VNM)*, which no utilities in PA have allowed yet
- VNM = meters on multiple properties linked to a single solar array on another property



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What about Pennsylvania?

- **A quick fix for community solar: require utilities to allow VNM**
- **A better fix: pass comprehensive enabling legislation that could allow VNM, and also:**
 - **Set project size, location, and subscriber guidelines**
 - **Clarify how subscribers are credited on their electric bills**
 - **Provide for equitable participation by low- and moderate-income subscribers.**

How to make it happen

- Education
- Building support
- Maintaining contact
- Stay informed:

– <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/stay-informed/>



Potential Barriers



- Utility resistance
- Lack of understanding of benefits
- Land use concerns / zoning

Resources

General Info - www.solarunitedneighbors.org/community-solar

IREC Scorecard - www.sharedrenewablescorecard.org

CCSA - www.communitysolaraccess.org/resources/

SEIA - www.seia.org/initiatives/community-solar

Thank You!

www.solarunitedneighbors.org/community-solar

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