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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING  
FOR NON-TIDAL WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS  
PERMIT APPLICATION  
SUBMITTED BY MD SOLAR 1 LLC.

\* \* \* \* \*

February 27, 2019

7:00 p.m.

Charles County Government Building  
200 Baltimore Street  
La Plata, Maryland

\* \* \* \* \*

## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 MS. SIGILLITO: Good evening. I would  
4 like to welcome everyone here to the Maryland  
5 Department of the Environment public  
6 informational hearing for non-tidal wetlands  
7 and waterways permit application submitted by  
8 MD Solar 1 LLC.

9 My name is Amanda Sigillito and I am chief  
10 of the non-tidal wetlands division at the  
11 Maryland Department of the Environment. I will  
12 be the presiding official for this evening's  
13 public informational hearing. Also in  
14 attendance with me from the department are Jeff  
15 Thompson, who is the project manager and  
16 central region chief for the non-tidal wetlands  
17 division. Jeff is in the back of the room.  
18 Bill Seiger, who is chief of the waterway  
19 construction division. John Backus, to my  
20 left, who's program manager of the  
21 environmental standards and assessment program.

1 Matt Stover, who is chief of the water quality  
2 standards division. And Angel Valdez, a  
3 naturally resource planner in the environmental  
4 standards and assessment program. I would like  
5 to thank the Charles County Commissioners for  
6 the use of their facility this evening.

7 At this time, I would like to introduce  
8 Secretary Ben Grumbles of the department for  
9 some opening remarks.

10 MR. GRUMBLES: I want to applaud all of  
11 you. We are glad you're here. We are really  
12 glad you're here. This is the most important  
13 step for us in gathering information as part of  
14 the permitting review process. I also want to  
15 thank the county for opening its doors, making  
16 this possible in this wonderful facility.

17 I also want to say that the MDE staff is  
18 not intentionally this aloof. It's the nature  
19 of the microphones system. They need to sit  
20 there, otherwise they'd rather be closer in.

21 This is a really important step in the

1 process for us and we understand there are  
2 strong and deeply held views on a variety of  
3 sides but this is critically important. And I,  
4 as the secretary of the environment, want to  
5 say we absolutely will gather every single  
6 thing that's said tonight.

7 I also want to underscore what Amanda will  
8 reinforce and that is our intention is to keep  
9 this hearing record open to gather additional  
10 information after tonight, in particular to  
11 gather information from proponents or those who  
12 would be purchasing the solar as to what the  
13 environmental impacts would be. We know that  
14 Georgetown University is looking harder at this  
15 project. So we have this hearing tonight to  
16 begin the process of gathering more public  
17 information and we will keep the hearing record  
18 open and we are going to continue to keep it  
19 open as we gather more information from you.

20 And, again, on behalf of the Department of  
21 the Environment, I just want to thank all of

1 you for your commitment, your interests, every  
2 single one of us understands that this is an  
3 important decision to be made and it can only  
4 be improved by gathering more information from  
5 the public and also learning more about the  
6 specific proposal and the components of it. So  
7 thank you so much for being here and I'll turn  
8 it back to you, Amanda, to move forward.

9 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you, Secretary  
10 Grumbles. We are here tonight in the context  
11 of MDE's review of an application for a solar  
12 project which presents a range of issues,  
13 including proposed impacts to non-tidal  
14 wetlands and waterways. MDE is seeking from  
15 the attendees here tonight your perspectives,  
16 views and concerns about the proposed project  
17 and its impact on non-tidal wetlands and  
18 waterways.

19 Public input is not only part of the  
20 administrative process for permitting, it is  
21 also essential to making well-informed and

1 thoughtful decisions. After I make some  
2 additional remarks about the pending  
3 application and its proposed impacts to  
4 non-tidal wetlands and waterways, I will then  
5 call on the applicant or the applicant's  
6 representative to make a statement regarding  
7 their project.

8 After these required presentations, the  
9 department will facilitate public statements by  
10 first calling on any elected officials or their  
11 representatives to make a statement. We will  
12 then call on those of you who indicated on the  
13 sign-in sheets that you would like to speak.  
14 You will be called out in the order that you  
15 signed in.

16 It's not necessary to read a statement to  
17 make it part of the official record. Written  
18 comments will also be accepted and received the  
19 same consideration as any oral statement. In  
20 fact, for accuracy, if you have a letter to  
21 read into the record, I suggest you also

1 provide us with the letter when you finish.

2 We do not permit cross-examination of the  
3 speakers during their presentations, but you  
4 may pose questions as part of your statement  
5 for our consideration in our permit evaluation.

6 This venue is for the department to hear  
7 and record your public comments. While we will  
8 not be responding to questions or comments  
9 posed tonight, those of you who have specific  
10 questions, may pose them as part of your formal  
11 statement.

12 The public informational hearing is being  
13 recorded. While the recordings will not  
14 necessarily be transcribed they will be used by  
15 the department to facilitate decision making. If  
16 there's anyone who has not signed the  
17 attendance sheet out front, please do so before  
18 you leave tonight.

19 In addition to identifying those of you  
20 who would like to make a statement following  
21 the applicant's presentation, the attendance

1 sheets will be used to notify you of any  
2 subsequent or additional opportunities for  
3 public comment. For example, if there are any  
4 additional environmental assessments which are  
5 completed and submitted to the record, MDE will  
6 provide an opportunity for public review and  
7 comment on the assessments and continue this  
8 hearing. This list will also be used to notify  
9 you with a decision and provide you with a copy  
10 of the hearing reports.

11 At this time I would like to acknowledge  
12 any elected officials who may be present here  
13 this evening. There are none. The  
14 department's conducting this evening's public  
15 informational hearing pursuant Subsection 5-204  
16 of the Environmental Article and Code Maryland  
17 Regulations 26230202, 26170413 and 26080204-1.

18 The purpose of this public informational  
19 hearing is for the applicant, MD Solar 1 LLC,  
20 to present an analysis impact that may be  
21 associated with the proposed activity,

1 including the impacts addressed in the  
2 non-tidal wetlands and waterways permit  
3 application pending before the department.

4 This public informational hearing is for  
5 non-tidal wetlands and waterways Permit  
6 Application Number 18-NT-0323/201861760  
7 submitted by MDE Solar 1 LLC. MDE Solar 1 LLC  
8 has applied to construct a 32.5 megawatt  
9 fixed-tilt solar panel array to provide energy  
10 to Georgetown University. The project location  
11 is 4850 Shugart Valley Place, La Plata in  
12 Charles County.

13 The project will include site clearing and  
14 grubbing of approximately 210 acres, the  
15 installation of modular solar panels, access  
16 and maintenance roads and electrical  
17 substation, overhead connection lines, security  
18 fence and screening landscape. The project  
19 will permanently impact 15,670 square feet of  
20 the 25-foot non-tidal wetlands buffer, 40  
21 linear feet of stream and convert 4,550 square

1 feet of forest wetland to emergent wetlands.  
2 The project will also temporarily impact 22  
3 linear feet of stream.

4 The project area is within the Ward's Run  
5 watershed, which includes two Tier II or  
6 high-quality stream segments. Currently both  
7 streams have assimilative capacity, meaning  
8 they are not considered degraded from their  
9 high-quality condition. The project's  
10 potential impact on Tier II stream segments  
11 includes reduction of forest cover in the  
12 watershed of the Tier II streams, as well as a  
13 reduction of the existing riparian buffers on  
14 Tier II and other on site streams.

15 At this time, I'll now ask the MD Solar 1  
16 LLC or their representative to come forward and  
17 make a presentation and if you could begin my  
18 giving us your names, please?

19 MR. THOMAS: My name's a Jason Thomas.  
20 I'm the director of development for Origis  
21 Energy. The purpose of my testimony tonight is

1 to provide an overview of the proposed MD Solar  
2 1 project. I've been asked to keep my remarks  
3 brief. Origis Energy is the solar development  
4 and operation company proposing the project.  
5 MD Solar 1 is the applicant seeking the  
6 waterway crossing and wetlands permit from the  
7 Maryland Department of the Environment.

8 This slide shows the view of the project.  
9 This board is also available in the alcove  
10 around the corner. The MD Solar 1 project is a  
11 32.5 megawatt alternating current photovoltaic  
12 solar facility. The project is approximately  
13 249 acres within two parcels totaling 588  
14 acres. The project address is 4852 Shugart  
15 Valley Place, La Plata, Maryland.

16 The permit application is associated with  
17 impacts in three specific areas, a temporary  
18 bridge on Shugart Valley Place that crosses  
19 Ward's Run. One culvert and an emergency  
20 access road and timbering two different  
21 locations on a generation tie line to

1 facilitate interconnection to the power line in  
2 the southeast corner. Dane Bower with H&B  
3 Services is here to explain the details of the  
4 permit application.

5 MR. BOWER: I'm Dane Bower with H&B  
6 Solutions. My partner and I, Melissa Hall, we  
7 do the environment assessments, do the  
8 submittals for permits and other approvals at  
9 the state and local level. When the client --  
10 they didn't purchase the property but we got  
11 lease agreements here and identified the  
12 property. We oversaw a team of various  
13 consultants and engineering firms that did the  
14 evaluation.

15 One of the things that I think is  
16 important to point out that this project  
17 probably got more field reviews and evaluations  
18 and joint site visits with representatives from  
19 DNR and MDE and other consultants on the team  
20 to identify the site in terms of its  
21 constraints, whether or not there were soils

1 that had to be avoided or slopes or wetlands or  
2 streams and it took months in order to identify  
3 all these constraints.

4 Once the constraints were identified, it  
5 was given to the designers, they came up with  
6 the preliminary plan that you see before you  
7 and the goal was to completely eliminate any  
8 impacts on wetlands.

9 In this slide here you can see there were  
10 only three areas as defined by Jason that were  
11 impacted. Out of 210 acres of project, there  
12 were only 6,000 square feet impacted; all of  
13 them were unavoidable.

14 Up there where it says stream crossing  
15 there is an existing culvert that has concrete  
16 over it that is used for access by the property  
17 owners who live there. It was not sufficient  
18 in size or structure in order to support  
19 construction equipment that would come in, so  
20 just downstream of Ward's Run from the existing  
21 culvert, we have to put a temporary bridge.

1 There's some impact to the stream buffers and  
2 they're all temporary in nature and there has  
3 to be a hydrologic analysis to make sure that  
4 we're not affecting the flood plain in any way.

5 The impact that was calculated is about 320  
6 square feet.

7 Also there is a culvert, where it says  
8 stream disturbance on the left side bottom of  
9 the slide, in that area there's an existing  
10 culvert which is not in good condition, needs  
11 to be repaired and upgraded and expanded  
12 somewhat in size. The total square footage  
13 associated with that is 240 square feet, very  
14 minimal very small.

15 Off to the right you can see the dotted  
16 lines that run from the corner of our project  
17 down to a new substation. That's the  
18 interconnection. Overhead lines and guidance  
19 for clearing is by the National Electrical  
20 Safety Codes. And there's a 75-foot corridor.  
21 We have to clear the trees in those areas but

1 we're not taking the roots out. We're only  
2 timbering them. So the root structure will  
3 stay in so we're not disturbing the land itself  
4 and there will be maintenance plans for that.  
5 We only touched on a few areas that were  
6 wetlands. It wasn't wetlands all underneath  
7 that corridor, only where the two dark spots  
8 are and the total impact in that area was 4,550  
9 square feet. So all together the unavoidable  
10 impacts were far less than an acre.

11 I might point out that the setbacks that  
12 the applicant has proposed are beyond COMAR.  
13 COMAR requires a 25-foot setback. Every place  
14 on this property they have -- the plan calls  
15 for a 35-foot setback. In addition to that  
16 there are mitigation requirements associated  
17 with the Public Service Commission license that  
18 was issued, one on them is a one-to-one  
19 mitigation on any forest clearing. The client  
20 and applicant is proposing to exceed that  
21 requirement and exceed many other setback

1 requirements. That's a general overview of  
2 what we applied for and I think that's probably  
3 sufficient for the record, unless MDE thinks we  
4 may need more.

5 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. I will now ask  
6 any elected officials or their representatives  
7 who may be present if they care to make a  
8 statement, then I will begin to call on members  
9 of the general public to make a statement.

10 When I call your name, if you would,  
11 please come forward to speak from this  
12 position. If it's difficult for you to come  
13 down we can run the wireless mic out to you.  
14 Let us know.

15 Please start your statements by clearing  
16 stating your name and any interests which you  
17 may be representing. In order that all persons  
18 wishing to speak may have an opportunity to do  
19 so, I will appreciate summarizing your  
20 statement and limiting your speaking to no  
21 longer than three minutes.

1           So I know at the beginning I asked if  
2 there were any elected officials and there  
3 weren't any in the room, but has anyone come in  
4 since we started the hearing?

5           Then I will start calling on those of you  
6 who wish to make a statement. And the first  
7 name is Austin Dougherty and the next on the  
8 list is Mary Pat Dougherty.

9           Good evening. I am Austin Dougherty I  
10 reside at 9220 Tayloes Neck Road in Nanjemoy,  
11 Maryland. I am a member of the Nanjemoy  
12 Potomac Environmental Coalition. I oppose the  
13 issuance of the wetlands permit to the above  
14 referenced project. As other participants in  
15 this evening's discussion have noted in their  
16 submissions, Charles County's 2016  
17 comprehensive plan does announce a goal of  
18 growing a green economy with an increased  
19 number of jobs in the clean energy and energy  
20 efficiency sector. That is a laudable goal. I  
21 support it. And I don't know anyone who

1 doesn't. But why should the first move in  
2 pursuit of a green economy be the destruction  
3 of greenery.

4 As I recall, the road to the comprehensive  
5 plan entailed many more hours of deliberation  
6 about the need to forestall further sprawl  
7 development. Citizen input and government  
8 resolve sought to save what is left of our  
9 forest canopy, our farms and our waters by  
10 designating priority preservation areas like  
11 the Nanjemoy peninsula where Solar 1 site is  
12 located.

13 I know that we are here tonight to give  
14 fair consideration to concerns relating to the  
15 pendency of this wetlands permit. However, I  
16 feel that the truth has not been well-served in  
17 the application process to date since,  
18 obviously, someone couldn't see the forest for  
19 the trees. Respectfully submitted.

20 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Next will be  
21 Mary Pat Dougherty and the next person will be

1 Maurice Dipoly and Brian Klass.

2 Mary Pat Dougherty, 9220 Tayloes Neck  
3 Road, Nanjemoy, Maryland. A wetlands permit is  
4 required from the Maryland Department of the  
5 Environment to let the project proceed. After  
6 considering all the issues the permit should be  
7 denied. A special exemption was needed from  
8 the Board of Appeals to advance this project to  
9 where it is today, however, many issues stand  
10 out such as a statewide blueprint for solar  
11 energy is actively being pursued in Annapolis.  
12 The value of the tree canopy was  
13 underestimated. There is an extreme amount of  
14 soil disturbance necessary due to steep slopes  
15 and changes of elevation. The quality of the  
16 streams and how they flow into the Nanjemoy  
17 Creek, the extent of the wetland after a year  
18 of heavy rain and how it has to be crossed.  
19 The out of state usage of solar power counting  
20 for credit in Charles County and the state of  
21 Maryland. The probable extensive and continued

1 use of a weed killer such as Roundup for  
2 routine maintenance, the potential  
3 environmental impact has not been calculated or  
4 is unknown.

5 The use of Roundup poses a hazard to the  
6 pollinators, birds, frogs, fish, crabs wildlife  
7 and humans. All these issues are not  
8 consistent with land-use plans, sustainability  
9 and the well-being of the surrounding  
10 community. There is no benefit to the  
11 surrounding community when the waterways are  
12 silted and polluted by chemicals.

13 Questions to ponder. Renewable energy and  
14 climate goals. How does cutting down trees,  
15 destroying habitat, disturbing soil, traversing  
16 wetlands, traversing streams and potentially  
17 polluting them and driving up air temperatures  
18 add up as a way to reach local, state, regional  
19 and federal renewable energy and climate goals.  
20 Has this loss been subtracted from the bottom  
21 line.

1 Close proximity to power lines. Why not  
2 install solar adjacent the miles and miles of  
3 existing SMECO and Dominion power lines where  
4 the land is already cleared, the infrastructure  
5 exists to tap into and is already maintained.

6 Weed killer usage. Is Roundup the next  
7 DDT. Fishing and crabbing. Will the industry  
8 be affected in the future due to poor water  
9 quality. Property rights. Do you really have  
10 the right to do whatever you want on your  
11 property. Don't we all have to get permits to  
12 build anywhere, especially in sensitive areas.  
13 Don't we all have to meet certain standards and  
14 submit to various inspections and comply with  
15 the zoning regulations. Best management  
16 practices. Have any been established for this  
17 industry or is it simply the next gold rush.

18 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Maurice  
19 Dipoly. And next up will be Brian Klass.

20 THE WITNESS: Good evening. My name is  
21 Maurice Dipoly I reside in Waldorf, Maryland.

1     Been a county resident almost 44 years.  
2     Looking forward to being a resident for another  
3     44 years I hope. I'm against this project. To  
4     me clearing 200 plus acres, cutting down our  
5     trees, which give us oxygen, cutting the trees  
6     down and leaving the roots makes no sense.  
7     Because what's above the roots creates the  
8     oxygen and helps helps us breathe.

9             Now this project is Georgetown and D.C.  
10     What are we gaining from it. We're gaining  
11     some rent money for a few years and that's it.  
12     No jobs, jobs to build it, but no permanent  
13     jobs to maintain it afterwards. If this  
14     project is so important to our rural  
15     communities, then we should have a vote on it  
16     and a referendum of some type in this county,  
17     not just being voted on by a few members of our  
18     commission.

19             Have you noticed how many homes are being  
20     built in St. Charles on the parkway, one house  
21     for 1/8th of an acre. West of 301 the

1 Washington -- WCD has one house per 20 acres.  
2 This doesn't make sense. You try to conserve  
3 the land with 20 acres for one house and now  
4 you want to cut down trees on 200 plus acres.  
5 It doesn't make sense. It's not consistent  
6 with what we've been doing. If it's wrong last  
7 year to approve the 20 acres, it's wrong this  
8 year to approve this 200 plus acre property.  
9 Do not approve this project for Georgetown and  
10 Washington, D.C. If we're not going to benefit  
11 by jobs, this county needs jobs. We don't need  
12 more environmental impact what we're going to  
13 be having. Cutting down the trees is not going  
14 to help us at all. Soon this will be a  
15 treeless community.

16 I moved here 44 years ago because it was  
17 raw. There was one light in our community and  
18 that's at 301 and Route 5. I worked at  
19 Andrews. Take me 20 minutes to get there. Now  
20 forget it. I can't count the number of lights  
21 and the number of time it takes me to get

1 there. Do not cut down the trees. Do not  
2 approve this project. I ask you to help us  
3 breathe. We're going to breathe more, I have  
4 COPD so it's hard for me to breathe. Don't cut  
5 off my oxygen by cutting down these trees.

6 Thank you for your time.

7 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Brian Klass  
8 and then Daniel Michael.

9 My name is Brian Klass and I live at 10340  
10 Tayloes Neck Road in Nanjemoy. I'm here to  
11 support the proposed solar project on Shugart  
12 Valley Place in La Plata. I reviewed this  
13 project and am comfortable that the significant  
14 benefits of this project far outweigh the  
15 minimal impact this project will have on our  
16 environment.

17 I am proud that we are moving forward on a  
18 project that will transition 32.5 megawatts of  
19 power produced from carbon emitting fossil  
20 fuels to clean renewable energy. As some may  
21 know, these projects can't just be placed

1 anywhere. This project is in close proximity  
2 to high capacity power lines capable of  
3 accepting and transmitting this amount of  
4 electrical energy as required. We are placing  
5 this project in the proper location. Hands  
6 down, without question, this is an incredible  
7 win for our community and our environment.

8 As an owner of a Maryland certified tree  
9 farm, I am also comfortable in the decision  
10 this landowner has made in cutting the number  
11 of trees required to create this solar farm.  
12 They are capable today of clear-cutting this  
13 entire 588 acre parcel just as every other  
14 property owner in this zoning district is  
15 allowed. Timbering is an allowable use. But  
16 they decided to cut less than half of their  
17 parcel and place the remainder in a perpetual  
18 conservation easement. I respect their  
19 decision and commend their efforts to address  
20 concerns from the community, which they have  
21 done openly, honestly and in good faith.

1           This project was presented to and approved  
2 by our county's Planning Commission. The  
3 Planning Commission's decision was upheld  
4 unanimously by our county's Board of Appeals.  
5 They received these approvals because this is a  
6 good project.

7           When Governor Hogan took office he said  
8 proudly that Maryland was open for business.  
9 We have a business venture that has been  
10 properly vetted, approved by all local  
11 authorities and provides clean, renewable  
12 energy, but I'd also like to share some other  
13 numbers. The current tax bill for the largest  
14 parcel that the majority of solar paneled will  
15 be on at this site is \$3,200 a year.

16           A leader for the opposition of this  
17 project placed a letter in our local paper this  
18 morning that upon completion of this project,  
19 and I quote, Charles County would only receive  
20 \$125,000 per year in personal property taxes  
21 and would end up with not even one permanent

1 full-time job. I was kind of taken back by  
2 this. Based on their own numbers and estimates  
3 of this project will generate over \$1.2 million  
4 in additional tax revenue over the next 10  
5 years. This money can be used to hire new  
6 teacher, hire new police officers, fund our  
7 county's non-profits. This money could be used  
8 to provide tax relieve.

9 I assure you, this additional revenue is  
10 need this project is a huge win for our state  
11 or county, our environment and our tax payers.

12 Maryland has participated in the Regional  
13 Greenhouse Gas Initiative since 2007. The RGGI  
14 is a cooperative effort by nine northeast and  
15 mid-Atlantic states to reduce CO2 emissions.  
16 Upon completion of this project, we will  
17 eliminate the greenhouse gases generated by  
18 32.5 megawatts of power generated from fossil  
19 burning power plants. I am proud of this. I  
20 am proud to support this project, as it aligns  
21 with Maryland's goal of reducing greenhouse

1 gases. This is a noble project and I request  
2 the MDE approve the permit needed to proceed,  
3 thank you.

4 MS. SIGILLITO: Daniel Michael and then  
5 Ken Hastings.

6 THE WITNESS: Good evening. I'm Danny  
7 Michael, a La Plata resident, Charles County  
8 resident all my life. I'm here representing  
9 the Charles County Chamber of Commerce as their  
10 chairman. On behalf of the Charles County  
11 Chamber of Commerce, I'm pleased to express our  
12 support for the Maryland Solar 1 solar power  
13 project proposed for Shugart Valley Place in La  
14 Plata, Maryland.

15 The Shugart solar power project is an  
16 innovative renewable energy project that  
17 demonstrates how business and the environment  
18 can coexist in a mutually beneficial manner.  
19 The chamber recommends MDE approve the issuance  
20 of the wetlands permit for this project.

21 In making its assessment, the chamber

1 reviewed the needs of the Charles County  
2 community as set forth in the Charles County  
3 comprehensive plan, the benefits to the Charles  
4 County community, the strict regulatory  
5 controls and reviews associated with this type  
6 of project, the conditions imposed upon the  
7 project by the state and Charles county, the  
8 steps this project has taken to offset and  
9 mitigate any impacts and the environmentally  
10 sensitive design of the project.

11 The chamber also reviewed the November  
12 2018 report commissioned by the Public Service  
13 Commission to study the impact of solar energy  
14 in Maryland. After such review the chamber  
15 believes that the project strikes the  
16 appropriate balance between green economic  
17 development project, individual property rights  
18 and the requisite environmental protections.  
19 The chamber's particularly pleased to see this  
20 opportunity in the western side of Charles  
21 County, as the chamber has been particularly

1 focused on opportunities for redevelopment and  
2 business investment in this area of the county.

3 The November 2018 report to the PSE  
4 concluded that the solar energy generates over  
5 23,460 jobs over 1.39 billion in labor income  
6 and tax revenue for the state of Maryland.  
7 1.39 billion in labor income and tax revenue  
8 for the state of Maryland.

9 In Charles County, the Shugart solar  
10 project is estimated to generate capital  
11 investment of approximately 31 million to \$34  
12 million, increase of over 200 design,  
13 management and construction jobs. The project  
14 will also connect to the power grid via the  
15 SMECO utility structure. Such an  
16 interconnection will provide reliability and  
17 sustainability to the power grid within Charles  
18 County. More importantly the project's clean  
19 solar energy will avoid up to 49,000 metric  
20 tons of carbon emissions per year.

21 This project furthers Charles County's

1 2016 comprehensive plan goal of growing a green  
2 economic with an increased number of jobs in  
3 the clean energy and energy efficiency sector.  
4 By proposing to preserve in perpetuity over 296  
5 acres of trees which are currently unprotected.  
6 The project also advances the 2016  
7 comprehensive plan goal of protecting large  
8 forested areas.

9 The project provides an additional benefit  
10 of keeping the property supportive of  
11 agricultural production via planting of  
12 naturally plants and grasses under and around  
13 the solar panels in accordance with the county  
14 approved pollinator plan to enhance needed  
15 habitat and the county's farming base. Thank  
16 you very much for your time. I have an  
17 additional letter here from Ebby Hungerford,  
18 our chair the economic development committee  
19 from Charles County Chamber of Commerce. I  
20 will not read it but I'd like to provide it.

21 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Ken Hastings

1 Bruce Dudley and Kevin Grimes.

2 My name's Ken Hastings. I live at 3904  
3 Fort Holly Drive, Mechanicsville 20659. I  
4 provided a letter, it has some references in  
5 there that I'm not going to try to go through  
6 that entire letter.

7 According to COMAR, MDE must consider the  
8 following factors before issuing the wetlands  
9 permit. Number 1, whether the applicant can  
10 document a good faith effort to analyze all  
11 alternative sites to avoid and minimize adverse  
12 impacts. For this project the wetlands impacts  
13 weren't even identified until well after the  
14 option to purchase the site was signed.

15 Two, whether the applicant can document  
16 attempts on obtain land ownership interests or  
17 other rights to conduct a project on an  
18 alternative sites which avoid and minimize  
19 impacts. Gold standard test for this when  
20 determining a good faith effort is made is  
21 documentation of actual efforts to purchase

1 alternative sites and a formal rejection of  
2 those offers.

3 Number 3, the total number and the  
4 physical economic and demographic  
5 characteristics of alternative sites  
6 considered. The applicant says two to four  
7 sites were evaluated. So was it two, was it  
8 three, was it four alternative sites evaluated  
9 years benefit the wetlands impact will be  
10 revealed. Where were they and why were they  
11 worse than this site.

12 Number 4, every state could reduce adverse  
13 impacts of non-tidal wetlands by review of site  
14 design of project configuration on each  
15 alternative site and analysis. ECS mid-Atlantic  
16 in a letter dated 2/16/18 recommended an  
17 alternative to clearing wetlands but that issue  
18 never made it into an on-site alternative  
19 analysis I don't know if it's a good idea or  
20 not but it belongs in the alternatives  
21 analysis.

1 I requested MDE deny the permit  
2 application for failure of the applicant to  
3 satisfy the regulatory mandates designed to  
4 stop irresponsible projects like this one.

5 The present position authorized by COMAR  
6 is already been validated and established. In  
7 1997 MDE denied a wetlands permit for the  
8 Summit Hill 3 project in St. Mary's County  
9 because the applicant failed to make sincere  
10 attempts to avoid the wetlands impacts by  
11 buying property somewhere else.

12 In COMAR terms the applicant failed to  
13 show good faith effort because he couldn't  
14 produce a written offer to purchase any other  
15 properties. The applicant appealed the MDE  
16 decision to the Office of Administrative  
17 Hearings. I included reference to that in my  
18 written comments. In 1999 the administrative  
19 law judge affirmed the MDE denial and the  
20 project died a natural death with this  
21 conclusion of law. The MDE properly denied the

1 application for a non-tidal wetlands permit for  
2 the reason that the appellant did not establish  
3 good faith efforts had been made to analyze  
4 obtaining purchase of land or right-of-way to  
5 avoid or minimize adverse impacts. Thank you.

6 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

7 My name is names Chris Dudley. I live in  
8 Bryans Road. Just before we start, I note on  
9 the prior testimony, the Planning Commission in  
10 Charles County hasn't looked at this.

11 So there are two sorts of errors in the  
12 application that I want to point out here,  
13 first have to do with the motivation for the  
14 project, the other have to do with the claims  
15 about the limitations of MDE's jurisdiction in  
16 the application.

17 Regarding motivation, I wrote to Jeff  
18 Shaw, SMECO's VP for distributed resources and  
19 sustainability, I wrote, I was sent a copy of  
20 the wetlands permit application for MD Solar 1,  
21 had a hearing here. The purpose, and it says

1 for the purpose of the project under 2D the  
2 purpose of the project is the construction,  
3 operating and maintenance of a solar energy  
4 generation facility. The facility will  
5 generate renewable energy to support the state  
6 of Maryland's renewable portfolio standard.

7 This project was selected by SMECO to provide  
8 renewable energy for the purpose of satisfying  
9 their requirements for renewable energy. The  
10 proposed panels have been placed, et cetera.

11 You have it before you.

12 This sounds as though they've cut and  
13 pasted from the Ripley project we discussed,  
14 since the power for this project will be sold  
15 to Georgetown University as a green project of  
16 their's and an entity outside the regional  
17 greenhouse gas initiative compact. It is hard  
18 to see how it satisfies any SMEOCO or state of  
19 Maryland needs. Were you aware that SMECO's  
20 name's being used in this apparently  
21 inappropriate manner.

1           He responded. I thank you for the update.  
2           You're correct. SMECO's not the outtaker of  
3           this project, it must have been an error of cut  
4           and paste. I, SMECO, was not aware of this  
5           error and will let them know. That's the end  
6           of what he had to say.

7           Looking at Maryland RPS law, this project  
8           also does not appear to qualify for meeting  
9           state requirements. The error in 2D means the  
10          error in seven, public need, public need as  
11          well. 7E, energy is spoken for,  
12          non-supplemental. F, it does not serve local  
13          residents because power's not sold to SMECO,  
14          the entity that serves the local residents. So  
15          those are the motivation problems.

16          Regarding jurisdictions. Appendix 2 of  
17          the project description there's the claim,  
18          placing the proposed solar array outside  
19          jurisdictional areas is false, as documented in  
20          the September 11th, 2017 MDE memo.

21          A Tier II stream catchment is a

1 jurisdictional area. Clear-cut and catchment  
2 with manifestly no assimilative capacity for  
3 sediment load or to support the state listed  
4 endangered dwarf wedge mussels cannot be  
5 mitigated by any BMV and the application has  
6 not even proposed settlement ponds.

7 This is related to the false claim 4F. No  
8 existing waters will be filled. Here in  
9 Charles County -- well, I'll hand you some  
10 more, but we've had problems of fillings of  
11 Port Tobacco river from sediment. It's been a  
12 horrible thing for the county historically and  
13 we just shouldn't allow -- the dwarf wedge  
14 mussel is federally and state listed.

15 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Kevin Grimes  
16 and Megan Mall.

17 My name is Kevin Grimes. I live in  
18 Nanjemoy, Maryland, 10450 Oxcart Lane. I live  
19 on the Nanjemoy Creek that this project will  
20 affect the stream that I live on.

21 Trees absorb carbon dioxide and convert it

1 back into oxygen. This is how most living  
2 things stay alive. I'm asking for respect for  
3 the web of life and in the Nanjemoy forest  
4 ecosystem and to protect biodiversity of the  
5 forest. I'm asking for support to protect  
6 threatened ecosystems. I believe Origis needs  
7 experts who understand sustainable projects,  
8 which this project is not.

9 It is going to take everyone, business  
10 people, politicians, farmers, lawyers,  
11 environmentalists, parents and students to  
12 ensure better future. We see flood waters  
13 taking days or even weeks to reseed in the  
14 county. The high waters stay up, flood area  
15 signs are being put where flooding wasn't an  
16 issue in the past. Overall rainfall is  
17 increasing over large parts of the world,  
18 especially the type of storms that bring huge  
19 downpours and in short periods of time with  
20 faster, heavier rains coming -- flooding that  
21 this project would not be able to deal with.

1 Forest is the best land use for preventing  
2 flooding. This type of development is  
3 counterproductive. It threatens the already  
4 endangered dwarf wedge muscle, along with  
5 anadromous fish such a river herring, shad,  
6 which both use -- the river herring shad have a  
7 moratorium on them. You cannot keep them.  
8 Also semi-anadromous fish, such as yellow perch  
9 use both streams, Ward's Run, also to spawn.

10 Can anyone honestly say that this project  
11 will leave these waters, Ward's Run or Nanjemoy  
12 Creek, better than it is now. The answer is  
13 no. The project is a lose-lose for Charles  
14 County.

15 Healthy streams are quickly becoming a  
16 thing of past. While Georgetown University  
17 students eat at the finest restaurants, many  
18 residents of Nanjemoy rely on the fish we catch  
19 for food, for dinner these streams. As well,  
20 commercial fisherman count on these waters to  
21 make a living. This counterproductive growth

1 is not economic development. Other sites were  
2 not explored.

3 Origis bragged that they have good soil on  
4 airfields. Maryland Airport received \$22  
5 million of our federal tax dollars and then  
6 they went bankrupt. They cleared a hundred  
7 acres and filled in stream valley. Putting  
8 solar there would be a win-win for the county.  
9 Thank you.

10 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. David Mall and  
11 then Loretta D'estacio. And then Mark Holtz.

12 My name is David Mall. I'm kind of an  
13 outsider here. I'm from Bel Air in Harford  
14 County, but I've been an avid outdoorsman all  
15 my life. And I worked in the construction  
16 industry and have benefited from a a lot of  
17 clearing of wooded sites and every time I see  
18 the bulldozers in a site tearing down trees it  
19 tears my stomach out. It's like someone kicked  
20 me in the stomach.

21 I'm an avid scuba diver, sailor on the

1 Chesapeake Bay, amateur herbatologist and I  
2 just enjoy the outdoors, canoeing, sailing,  
3 whatever.

4 I've seen the quality of the water in the  
5 Chesapeake degrade. I grew up on Seneca Creek  
6 in Baltimore County. As a young child used to  
7 go out and snorkel and dive in the waters there  
8 and we had excellent visibility. Now you can't  
9 see your hand in front of your face.

10 Every time there is a property cleared,  
11 wooded property cleared, it increases the  
12 runoff into the Bay, it degrades the  
13 environment. And we're all for solar power and  
14 improving the environment by generating solar  
15 panels, I have solar panels on my sailboat and  
16 they work just -- performed beyond my wildest  
17 expectation. So I'm all for solar. But to  
18 tear down 200 acres of trees and bulldozer the  
19 environment, it absolutely makes no sense.  
20 There are plenty of other areas where this  
21 site -- these solar panels can be sighted

1 without the destruction of a natural  
2 environment. And it makes no sense to me to  
3 cut down 200 acres, to clear 200 acres of trees  
4 and destroy the habitat of enumerable wildlife  
5 animals and reptiles, amphibians, squirrels,  
6 birds everything. It just makes no sense  
7 whatsoever. And that's all I have to say.

8 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

9 Hi. My name is Lorretta D'estacio. I  
10 live at 9760 Walters Landing Road, Nanjemoy,  
11 Maryland. I live on the creek just opposite  
12 from where Ward's Run is going on enter the  
13 Nanjemoy Creek. The Nanjemoy Creek at that  
14 place is about a quarter of a mile wide, so  
15 it's a substantial creek. Ward's Run goes a  
16 very long way through a lot of wetlands across  
17 Route 6. I've paddled on Ward's Creek all the  
18 way up to the first beaver dam, just south of  
19 Route 6 and I've dipped for  
20 macro-invertebrates, north of the creek for  
21 DNR. So I'm real familiar with Ward's Run.

1 It's a beautiful creek. It supports a lot of  
2 life, clams and fish. On the other side of  
3 Route 6, which is pretty incredible because  
4 it's only about three feet wide there.

5 I can't believe that we're going to even  
6 consider clearing over 240 acres of trees, not  
7 just cutting the trees down but digging up the  
8 roots and doing considerable grading of the  
9 slopes, basically going to disturb 240 acres of  
10 topsoil, rake it clean and then plant between  
11 100,000 to 140,000 solar panels.

12 The water runoff when the rain meets those  
13 is going to be pretty intense. There are  
14 allowing 35 feet generous protected barrier  
15 between that and the wetlands and the creek.  
16 This past year in Nanjemoy we had at least, in  
17 my unofficial unscientific measuring, four  
18 deluges, which are six inches or more of rain  
19 in one day. I'm just imagining that much rain  
20 hitting that acreage on that creek. The silt  
21 that it's going to generate, 25 feet or 35 feet

1 of trees is not going to stop it.

2 We're going to have -- Nanjemoy Creek is  
3 going to be like Port Tobacco Creek, which is  
4 pretty much unusable.

5 Really quickly. A lot of other much more  
6 intelligent people will speak to this, but talk  
7 about the road. They're proposing to bring  
8 trucks along Route 6 and up 425 which between  
9 on that road there is already just south of the  
10 proposed site a permanently marked flood area.  
11 So I can only imagine that this is going to  
12 increase that flooding. That road has a lot of  
13 blind spots and two curves that make a  
14 90-degree turn and there are going to be bikes.  
15 So there you go. That's it. Thank you.

16 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Mark Holt.  
17 Then Alec winters and then Richard Curt.

18 Hello, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Mark  
19 Holt. I live in an address of Indian Head,  
20 Maryland but it's not Indian Head. It's  
21 actually near the site about five miles away.

1 I'd like to mirror a few comments that I've  
2 heard earlier that there were exactly right on  
3 the money.

4 One of the comments was about Annapolis.  
5 I was just in Annapolis on Tuesday and on  
6 another actual solar issue and one of the  
7 things that is actually in debate right now is  
8 the clear cutting. It's basically being talked  
9 about endlessly with some of the elected  
10 officials, like Penskey and Peters Rosa Peppy,  
11 Stein and others and I just think we're a  
12 little premature in having a hearing like this  
13 until we get the policy down that's actually  
14 being debated this session.

15 And also I'd like to kind of support  
16 another statement I heard from Kevin Grimes  
17 about this flooding. I saw high water signs go  
18 up right near that site and I can't imagine if  
19 those trees on that site were cut. There would  
20 be a torrent of water and runoff that would  
21 occur from that site. And there are other

1 sites in the county that would work for this  
2 type of farm and I think we should explore  
3 alternative sites. Thank you.

4 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

5 I'm Alex Linchard of Bryans Road. With  
6 respect -- it's ludicrous. The people have  
7 been wanting soft energy pass for decades. Now  
8 we're told you can have solar but we're going  
9 to cut down forest. This is a water quality  
10 hearing. Cutting down that forest is not going  
11 to help the water quality. Solar exists on  
12 impervious services. It's being built there.  
13 That's where it is supposed to be.

14 The proponents, they say this is going to  
15 sequester carbon, as if the choice were either  
16 you're going to have solar or you can have  
17 forest but you can't have both. It is  
18 ludicrous. It has to be built -- it has to be  
19 built on impervious surfaces. There is an  
20 economic push to put this. The woods of  
21 Nanjemoy are the lungs of D.C. It's one of the

1 most amazing forests in the mid-Atlantic. And  
2 so close to the sea and to fragment it, if it  
3 is economically available to do this one site,  
4 if they can make money there, then they're  
5 going to go to every old person who are  
6 financially pressured, buy their land cheap,  
7 tell them this and that, buy the land cheap,  
8 that's why they're doing it not because it's a  
9 good place but because the land is cheap. And  
10 it will fragment this forest and we'll lose it.  
11 We'll lose it, because once you start  
12 fragmenting forest you greatly degrade the  
13 value.

14 I believe that there are many false and  
15 misleading statements in the presentation. I  
16 base that on scientists who I have talked to,  
17 but I'm sure that the record is going to get  
18 filled up with challenges to some of the  
19 assertions.

20 Please do not stop the lungs of D.C. of  
21 Southern Maryland, do not fragment this

1 beautiful forest, do not start this precedent.  
2 And one more thing, if you start this precedent  
3 it will be -- the next one is going to be an  
4 impact, a secondary impact following from this  
5 one because you've established this new thing,  
6 you can cut down trees in Charles County in  
7 Nanjemoy and put up a -- there will be more.  
8 So there is a major federal tax benefit, if I'm  
9 not mistaken, to the solar company, that's a  
10 federal involvement and there should be an  
11 environmental impact statement but there  
12 shouldn't be because you should just deny this  
13 permit.

14 MS. SIGILLITO: Mark Inlay and Bob Luck.

15 Good evening. Thank you for having me  
16 Richard Cook, M.D., board certified internist.  
17 I live in Hughesville, Maryland 12915  
18 Corinthian Court. I'm 100 percent against the  
19 proposed Georgetown University solar project.

20 I'd like start out by saying it doesn't  
21 make any economic or scientific sense to kill

1 an environmental area to save the environment.  
2 I think the public and private  
3 citizens/companies aren't responsible for  
4 maintaining our environment, in spite of all  
5 the challenges opposed by climate change. So I  
6 have a question does it make sense to pollute  
7 the water knowing you can just filter it or  
8 clean it up later? Of course not.

9 We already have a perfect example of this  
10 with the decades long Chesapeake Bay clean up,  
11 the billions of Maryland taxpayer dollars used  
12 as well as this affects on multiple industries  
13 of the Chesapeake. So, again, it doesn't make  
14 sense to destroy the environment in order to  
15 save it, especially when there are so many  
16 other safer options to use and this is the kind  
17 of conundrum I would call an oxymoron, kind of  
18 like lead pipes, minor crisis, extinct life,  
19 ill-health or wise fool.

20 I would next like to make everyone aware  
21 of the 2017 Charles County ecosystems services

1 study done by our previous Board of  
2 Commissioner's. And for citizens not aware of  
3 this study, the ecosystems services are defined  
4 as any monetary or non-monetary benefits  
5 citizens receive from their environment how do  
6 we fair in Charles County. Well, I think the  
7 Department of Commerce would like to hear this.  
8 Our ecosystem provides each citizen  
9 approximately \$290 per month, or in total, \$535  
10 million per year and when taking into account  
11 this is 1/8th of our 4 billion dollar economy  
12 per year. So when we take down 200 plus acres  
13 of forest, it's like telling one of Charles  
14 County's largest employers to shut down a  
15 portion of that business. That is not sound  
16 and when these ecosystems are lost they, of  
17 course, have to be replaced with expensive  
18 man-made alternatives which are pricey and  
19 ultimately increase our taxes. These man-made  
20 alternatives are the building, maintaining  
21 and/or replacement, replacing of costly

1 infrastructure through water purification and  
2 recharge, temperature regulation, flood  
3 control, watershed protection, erosion  
4 reduction aesthetic value, reducing air  
5 pollution, staining wildlife habitat and  
6 biodiversity and providing agriculture.

7 This is in addition to the economic  
8 contributions of the outdoor recreation tourism  
9 industry which draw approximately 1 million  
10 people here per year. So in conclusion, I ask  
11 that with all the many scientifically viable  
12 options out there, please use more common sense  
13 management approach that reduces the  
14 vulnerability to our existing ecosystem. Thank  
15 you very much.

16 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. We'd like to  
17 make a request, if you can hold your applause  
18 just so everyone can hear their name being  
19 called I would appreciate it. Mark Imlay and  
20 Bob Kenny, then Jeremy Stewart.

21 I have been asked by the Sierra Club and

1 Green Peace and other organizations to because  
2 I was the employee of the federal government  
3 Office of Endangered Species Fish and Wildlife  
4 Services that listed the dwarf wedge muscle.  
5 So I have -- and I can e-mail the testimony but  
6 the background is that, first, no federal  
7 agency may authorize funds or carry out any  
8 action which may jeopardize the future  
9 existence of any species lists pursuant to  
10 Section 4 of this act, Section 7 of the  
11 Endangered Species Act of 1973.

12 The application for the Georgetown  
13 University solar project has not demonstrated  
14 that its obtained a permit from the U.S. Fish  
15 and Wildlife Service for the federally listed  
16 endangered dwarf wedge mussel despite its  
17 planned use of the federal investment tax  
18 credit for solar power.

19 And then I'd like to mention -- what I  
20 have here is the background information as to  
21 how we listed the dwarf wedge mussel, which at

1 the time it decreased to 10 percent of its  
2 original range and what were the reasons for it  
3 and sedimentation was one of most important  
4 reasons because the dwarf wedge mussel is a  
5 filter feeder and while you have a big tree  
6 falls down in the forest, it can handle that  
7 kind of sedimentation, but sedimentation like  
8 this, the particle size is the same size as the  
9 particles that it eats, so it starves to death,  
10 just like the menhaden fish is another example.  
11 So it turns out that was the primary cause of  
12 decline of the dwarf wedge mussel in other  
13 habitats.

14 So I would like us to -- well, so that  
15 basically means, as I understand it, the  
16 project right now is illegal. So we haven't  
17 gone through the process to look at the -- you  
18 mentioned there's about 200 dwarf wedge mussels  
19 have come back in the area, so we have good  
20 water quality habitat. It requires -- a dwarf  
21 wedge mussel is a very beautiful and unique

1 species which you have to find it and I looked  
2 for it and found it in Mackintosh Run. It has  
3 to be about one foot of height and about five  
4 feet of slope, moderate current. It can't be  
5 fast or slow water. And the areas must be  
6 nearly silt free. And then I have the  
7 references from scientists in the past 50 years  
8 on sedimentation and particle size and filter  
9 feeders, so -- shall I give this to somebody?

10 MS. SIGILLITO: Yes.

11 Good evening. I'm Bob Leukenick. I'm  
12 speaking on behalf of the Southern Maryland  
13 Audubon Society. I'm the conservation chair  
14 and we're an affiliate of the National Audubon  
15 Society and I reviewed and support the info  
16 that will be stated by Dr. Kurts in the Audubon  
17 Maryland D.C.

18 There has been and will be plenty of  
19 technical info for you to see that this is not  
20 a good site for this project. Historic  
21 misstates bring me to mind the mistakes of

1 ignoring the affects of such a project on our  
2 natural resources. It may be apples and  
3 oranges comparison but over a century ago we  
4 started building hydroelectric cheap, clean  
5 energy resources. Apparently only the  
6 advantages were considered and no consideration  
7 of the down sides. It has and is still costing  
8 us millions and millions to do away with the  
9 many projects that adversely affected wildlife  
10 corridors. There's one major one threatening  
11 the entire health of the Chesapeake Bay now.

12 Siting these solar farms may not do that  
13 much harm, but our natural areas have  
14 drastically shrunk and are shrinking and by  
15 that percentage the downside of the planned  
16 degradation of this contiguous forest may be on  
17 that level.

18 Society and technology has advanced way  
19 beyond relying on an archaic theory that there  
20 has to be a tradeoff of our natural resources  
21 to replace our fossil fuel dependence. This

1 and future projects like this need  
2 comprehensive planning. It's not hard to look  
3 this over and determine it is the wrong place  
4 for this project. So I say you have to scratch  
5 this and start over. I have a study made for  
6 southeast in my research, did for southeast  
7 United States, if you'd like to have it. It's  
8 a pretty comprehensive study, covers sitings  
9 such as that.

10 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Jeremy Stewart  
11 and then Tar Carlson and Howard Getz.

12 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My  
13 name's Jeremy Stewart. I am one of the heirs  
14 to this piece of property. And we've been  
15 paying taxes on this piece of property for  
16 approximately 101 years. I understand people's  
17 dismay when they say they're cutting down 240  
18 acres of trees. But what they forget is this  
19 property's also surrounded by another 240 acres  
20 of trees. So it's inclined to protect itself.

21 Origis is doing everything in their power

1 to make sure we do not have any problems with  
2 water runoff or destroying the streams. They  
3 have been studying this piece of property now  
4 for almost two years and they have drilled  
5 holes in every place that you can imagine over  
6 there. They've driven stakes in the ground  
7 over there everywhere to find out whether these  
8 panels will rise or fall according to what the  
9 earth will withstand when the panels move with  
10 the sun.

11 Ward's Run has been in my family all my  
12 life of 70 years. I've crossed it pretty much  
13 every day for probably 65 of those years and,  
14 yes, sometimes there is -- with these storms  
15 that we have we have an immense amount of water  
16 coming through there. I don't think that these  
17 people realize how many thousands of acres of  
18 land is drained through Ward's Run, which does  
19 not go to Nanjemoy, it goes around by George  
20 Dyson's house, Eddie Stinnet's house and out to  
21 the Potomac River.

1           So the other portion of it is kind of a  
2 tough situation, too. This property's been in  
3 my family for 101 years. We are trying to find  
4 a way to settle our estate. Origis has come in  
5 and they showed us the studies, we've had  
6 numerous meetings with them, they've given us a  
7 tremendous amount of information on the water  
8 runoff, the temporary bridge to avoid issues of  
9 traffic going in and out. This project, from  
10 my understanding's, not supposed to last over  
11 eight, 10 months at the most.

12           So, has any development that we all live  
13 in, we cut down some trees that we have a place  
14 to live. Well, the next development comes  
15 home, they want to build \$400,000 houses.  
16 Where do they want to build them, all these  
17 condos in Waldorf which are fire traps. So I  
18 think with Origis' procedures of the water  
19 runoff, the minimal amount of invasion in the  
20 creek that's down there where they're going to  
21 put the bridge, it's not much bigger than my

1 house. So you drive across the bridge and you  
2 go on up there and you put up the solar panels.  
3 Georgetown gets a better rate on their  
4 electricity, the students get a better deal on  
5 their education. The people from Charles  
6 County that are going to build this are going  
7 to be gainfully employed for a period of time.  
8 I understand that it will not be maintenance  
9 forever on a daily basis, it's not going to  
10 incorporate a lot of people, we all understand  
11 that. Thank you very much.

12 MS. SIGILLITO: Tara Carlson, Howard Dent  
13 and Kimberly Grant.

14 My name is Tara Carlson. I live at 8807  
15 Dement Court, Waldorf, Maryland 20603. I ask  
16 that you deny the permit. It's all about  
17 location. The loss of the large contiguous  
18 forest in Nanjemoy is too dear. We tend in  
19 this society to undervalue a forest, but the  
20 Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
21 conservation benefit assessment put the value

1 of the ecosystem services of the forest at  
2 \$2,440 annually per acre. The forest is doing  
3 its part in mitigating environmental impacts of  
4 our current lifestyle. With another location  
5 for this project, we could double the benefits  
6 rather than trading green assets. And just in  
7 reference to Mark Emily's testimony, the  
8 Mattawoman Watershed Society, of which I'm a  
9 member, looks forward to the reestablishment of  
10 dwarf wedge mussel in Mattawoman Creek as part  
11 of its planned recovery, but for that to happen  
12 we must maintain the Nanjemoy population to  
13 allow this. Thank you very much you.

14 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

15 Good evening. My name is Howard Dent. My  
16 wife and I have owned a home on Bank City Road  
17 in Newburg for almost 20 years. I thank you  
18 for the opportunity to testify this evening. I  
19 applaud Georgetown University's commitment to  
20 using renewable energy. They've received  
21 rewards and grants for their renewable energy

1 projects.

2 Georgetown's website tells what the  
3 off-campus solar farm will do for the  
4 university. What their website does not tell  
5 us what is missing, the cost of clear cutting  
6 the land. The fragmentation of two large  
7 forests, the large forest in a targeted  
8 ecological area and the threat to two Tier II  
9 streams.

10 Greenwashing is what happens with a  
11 hopeful public eager to behave responsibly  
12 about the environment is presented with  
13 evidence that makes the industry seem friendly  
14 to the environment when, in fact, the industry  
15 is not as wholly amicable as it might be. I  
16 think we can consider this Georgetown  
17 University plan greenwashing.

18 Now is Georgetown University the recipient  
19 of greenwashing or is it the perpetrator of  
20 greenwashing. It does not seem to matter to  
21 Georgetown University that the forest in

1 Charles County will be cut down. What seems  
2 important to Georgetown is how it looks on  
3 their campus in Washington. Will it qualify  
4 them for more rewards. Either way Charles  
5 County loses an important ecological and  
6 environmental resource. There must be better  
7 places to put solar panels, the roof of the  
8 Georgetown Hospital perhaps or its parking  
9 garage or capped landfills or depleted  
10 farmland. I ask you to turn down this  
11 proposal. There has to be a better site.  
12 Thank you for your time. Thank you.

13 MS. SIGILLITO: Kimberly Grant then Paco  
14 Blake and Shelby Grush.

15 Good evening. I'm Kimberly Grant with  
16 Preservation Maryland. Tonight I'm speaking  
17 for the Smarter Growth Alliance for Charles  
18 County, which is a coalition of 22 state and  
19 local organizations working together to promote  
20 quality development in areas planned for growth  
21 and to protect Charles County's environmental

1 assets, to preserve and enhance the quality of  
2 life enjoyed by residents we ask that you deny  
3 this permit.

4 We are concerned about impacts to the  
5 wetlands and high-quality Tier II streams on  
6 this site, especially in light of the extensive  
7 grading that is proposed. We are also  
8 concerned with the impact of clear-cutting  
9 hundreds of acres of Southern Maryland's  
10 largest forest.

11 We are troubled that so much of the public  
12 discussion about this project by the applicant  
13 is focused on carbon. Our forests serve many  
14 other functions, including providing wildlife  
15 habitat, supporting ground water recharge and  
16 mitigating flooding. As part of a forest, this  
17 property captures a lot of water, recognizing  
18 that are members and supporters who are  
19 downstream property owners have real concerns  
20 about how their properties will be impacted if  
21 this site is cleared and graded as proposed.

1           In the recent Washington Post article  
2           concerning this project, Linda Reading was  
3           quoted as saying green projects should not  
4           destroy green resources. This is especially  
5           true of the green resources like these on this  
6           site that have been identified by the Maryland  
7           Department of Natural Resources as the best of  
8           the best in our state because the their  
9           ecological value.

10           We all need to reject this often repeated  
11           idea put fourth by the applicant that we have  
12           to choose between protecting and preserving  
13           environmental assets and supporting renewal  
14           energy. This is a false dilemma. This is not  
15           an either or situation. There's no doubt that  
16           there's sufficient brain power at Georgetown  
17           University to figure out how they can advance  
18           their sustainability goals without coming into  
19           a Maryland community and destroying  
20           environmental assets that we as Marylanders  
21           treasure. So we ask again that MDE deny this

1 permit. We thank you all for holding this  
2 hearing which we realize you did not have to do  
3 and we thank you, the staff and secretary  
4 Grumbles for being here tonight.

5 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Paco Blake.

6 THE WITNESS: Then Shelby Griff and Beth  
7 Decker.

8 My name's Paco Blake. I live on 8675  
9 Chickamuxen Road, which is in Indian Head but  
10 it's really close to Nanjemoy. I have had  
11 solar panels on my house since 2014. I'm also  
12 a tree farmer and have been doing that for  
13 quite sometime.

14 What puzzles me is that this project wants  
15 to cut these 200 acres when there's available  
16 land that's open. That makes no sense. Right  
17 close to me is a 552 acre gravel pit that  
18 hasn't been mined in 20 years. It's just  
19 sitting there. What's wrong with that. It's  
20 already cleared. It's got industrial grade  
21 hookups. They're old but they're still there.

1 It's right by high power tension lines. Has  
2 this site been looked at. It's there.

3 And I know there's other sites but it  
4 puzzles me why the stream crossings, all the  
5 other things would happen, when there's other  
6 sites just sitting there waiting. So it makes  
7 no sense to me. So I would urge you all to  
8 look at the Maryland rock facility. It's owned  
9 by a place in Alabama. They don't care. So I  
10 think you all maybe look a little harder and  
11 see what's available instead of doing all the  
12 clear-cutting and the stream crossing and all  
13 this other stuff. Just look at what's  
14 available. That's it.

15 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

16 THE WITNESS: Beth Decker and then Carolyn  
17 Varteck.

18 Good evening. I'm here on behalf of the  
19 Georgetown Green Club. That's the Georgetown  
20 renewable energy and environmental network. As  
21 student members of Green, this is a statement

1 prepared by the club.

2 As student members of Green, the largest  
3 environmental student group at Georgetown  
4 University, we appreciate the opportunity to be  
5 involved in this discussion tonight. As such,  
6 the potential construction of the La Plata  
7 solar farm and the wide-ranging impacts thereof  
8 are of utmost importance to us.

9 As students, we were are in solidarity  
10 with the university's goal of reducing its  
11 carbon footprint by increasing its investment  
12 in renewable energy. Our university's  
13 investment in renewable energy is dependent on  
14 the outcome of our first off-campus project.  
15 We recognize that the La Plata solar farm will  
16 create a large net carbon offset approximately  
17 generating the carbon sink of a 30,000 acre  
18 forest with the deforestation of only 218 acres  
19 of forest.

20 We would like to draw attention to the  
21 fact that of the 518 acres of purchased land,

1 278 acres will be placed under permanent  
2 preservation. We also recognize Origis  
3 Energy's Company's commitment to include  
4 pollinator friendly vegetation underneath the  
5 solar panels and to support the Georgetown  
6 community through financial aid grants.

7 However, we would also like to acknowledge  
8 the significance of both the ecological and  
9 indigenous peoples' concerns regarding the  
10 project. Among other ecological issues, we  
11 would like to stress that land is home to old  
12 growth trees, Tier II streams and rare species  
13 of birds. Though we are in support of our  
14 administration's decision to employ a  
15 third-party to conduct the ecological  
16 assessment of the project, we are worried that  
17 the impact of the findings of such a measure  
18 will be impaired by its tardiness.

19 We are also concerned with our  
20 University's lack of communication with the  
21 Piscataway people, who are indigenous to the

1 region, consultation with the Piscataway people  
2 is vital to the proper carrying out of this  
3 project. While we wish the University would  
4 have been more thorough and transparent in its  
5 planning of the solar plan's construction, we  
6 hope that this hearing will lead to a greater  
7 collaboration effort between all parties  
8 involved. Moving forward, we, as student  
9 members of Green, plan to continue our  
10 involvement and advocacy in this issue and look  
11 forward to further dialogue. Thank you.

12 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Beth Decker.

13 Thank you. I am Beth Decker. I'm the  
14 chair of the Sustainability Working Group of  
15 the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership. We  
16 are a 39 member organization that are part of a  
17 public/private partnership focused on  
18 conserving 143 species of greatest conservation  
19 need as outlined in Maryland's wildlife action  
20 plan.

21 The fact that this proposal impacts forest

1 interior species is something that is very  
2 concerning to us. I'd like to share that a  
3 significant impact is the change to hundreds of  
4 acres of surrounding land that will be altered  
5 through conversion from forest interior to  
6 forest edge. In the critical area, the forest  
7 edge within 300 feet of a forest edge is  
8 considered edge habitat. Interior habitat is  
9 commonly defined as the forest area found  
10 greater than 300 feet from the forest edge.

11 This habitat functions as the highest quality  
12 breeding habitat for the interior species.

13 When a forest becomes fragmented, areas  
14 that once functioned as interior breeding  
15 habitat are converted to edge habitat. The  
16 forest edge is exposed to more light and wind  
17 than the interior of the forest resulting in a  
18 change in moisture and vegetative composition.  
19 Small and fragmented forests tend to be dryer  
20 and have less leaf litter. Leaf litter is  
21 important for maintaining arthropods for hungry

1 birds. Neotropical migrants in general feed on  
2 insects while on their Maryland breeding  
3 grounds.

4 In addition, increased densities of deer  
5 in many of our forests result in loss of plant  
6 diversity and structural diversity from  
7 overgrazing on the forest floor and the  
8 mid-story.

9 Invasive plants such as Japanese  
10 honeysuckle and English Ivy encroach into  
11 smaller forest fragments limiting the growth of  
12 native plants, stifling natural succession and  
13 limiting the vegetative and structural  
14 diversity.

15 So we want to offer this testimony in  
16 direct repudiation of the previous testimony  
17 that says that they have "completely eliminated  
18 threats on wetlands and that the impact is far  
19 less than an acre," to quote the previous  
20 applicant.

21 I'd also like to point out that somebody

1 who prior testified from the Maryland tree farm  
2 suggested that timbering is allowable and I'm a  
3 project learning tree coordinator for Maryland  
4 and I'm currently leading a team that is  
5 drafting a forest literacy plan and this is the  
6 primary reason why.

7 I would just offer that sustainable  
8 forestry is the additional use of that land  
9 without taking it out of production. And it is  
10 not about the number of trees. It's more about  
11 how the ecosystem functions. So we would  
12 request that you deny the applicant. Thank  
13 you.

14 MS. SIGILLITO: Carolyn Parsa and then  
15 Victor Moth and Bonnie Bid.

16 I'm Carolyn Parsa and I'm from Safe Skies  
17 Maryland, which is a bird conservation  
18 organization. And we have number of concerns  
19 about this project.

20 The first concern about the project is  
21 location. Renewable energy should not come at

1 the cost of forest destruction but,  
2 additionally, it's important to understand that  
3 while there was testimony saying only half of  
4 the site will be built upon, the entire site  
5 will be affected adversely by this  
6 construction.

7 The second concern that we have is with  
8 regard to fencing. If fencing surrounds the  
9 site, especially if it includes electricity or  
10 barbed wire, this will impact a host of  
11 animals, living, breeding and attempting to  
12 migrate through the surrounding lands,  
13 including deer, owls and a great other range of  
14 species. It's not uncommon for deer to impale  
15 themselves on fencing and for many birds to  
16 become trapped and risk death, including many  
17 species of owls. Barrier fencing is a factor  
18 to be considered as having an impact on the  
19 form and function of the surrounding ecosystem,  
20 which is to save the forest that they are  
21 preserving and will have a harm short range and

1 long range migrants.

2           Additionally, industrial lighting has not  
3 been brought up. And this is used in the  
4 operation of maintenance of infrastructure  
5 referred to as ALAN, artificial light at night,  
6 has been known to impact entire ecosystems from  
7 the individual to all parts of the food web.  
8 And a study of these affects, artificial  
9 lighting at night in estuaries implications  
10 from individuals to ecosystems is offered as  
11 part of this testimony and I have that here and  
12 is summarized.

13           At the individual level, ALAN can elicit a  
14 suite of physiological and behavioral responses  
15 associated with light mediated process, such  
16 idyllic activity patterns and predator/prey  
17 interactions, ALAN has been shown to modify  
18 community composition entropic structure with  
19 implications for ecosystem level processes,  
20 including primary productivity, nutrient  
21 cycling and the energetic linkage between

1 aquatic and terrestrial systems.

2 So the addition of artificial light into  
3 the interior will alter the subsequent behavior  
4 of both aquatic and terrestrial animals in the  
5 surrounding ecosystem and that should be  
6 considered as well. A best practice would have  
7 been to consider areas, industrial project  
8 sites, that were previously disturbed, which  
9 means they are not highly sensitive  
10 environments, may have already been used  
11 likely, like the closed landfill, rooftops,  
12 farmlands on power lines. We ask that you deny  
13 this permit. Thank you.

14 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Bonnie Vick  
15 and then Nancy Sherp.

16 Hi, my name is Victoria Moth. I'm a  
17 Master of Public Policy student at Georgetown  
18 University. I ask that you oppose the  
19 applicant. And I 100 percent oppose.

20 So Georgetown University prides itself on  
21 its sustainability initiatives. Recently

1 publicizing its Magado Sea fund, named after  
2 Pope Francis' II on care for our common home.  
3 It prevents the environmental degradation,  
4 irresponsible development and global warming  
5 across the world.

6           However, Georgetown University shouldn't  
7 find itself to the obvious issues at hand that  
8 point to such irresponsible development  
9 involving environmental degradation and the  
10 affect of global warming. I ask that Maryland  
11 hold fast to its pristine natural resources  
12 citing the Tier II water streams in the area --  
13 the watershed. We take for granted our assets.

14           In fifth grade, which was 2005, I learned  
15 about the Aral Sea which was the fourth largest  
16 lake in the world. It began to shrink in the  
17 '60s. However, in 2014 it dried up completely.  
18 Why and how? It's because in the '60s the  
19 Soviet Union diverted water from the rivers  
20 that used to feed the sea for irrigating  
21 literal desert. And that caused irreparable

1 ecological devastation, caused the loss of  
2 fishing livelihoods for everybody living there  
3 and caused innumerable respiratory diseases for  
4 the humans living near there because the  
5 environment was the one regulating the  
6 conditions that allowed people to live there  
7 safely and all the environment lifeforms that  
8 were living there.

9 So I ask will Georgetown, Origis and the  
10 heirs of the land sold to Origis leave a legacy  
11 of forest fragmentation? Forest fragmentation  
12 is a well-documented phenomenon with decades of  
13 research showing that there is irreparable  
14 ecological damages caused when you separate  
15 portions of forest. This is because birds have  
16 to travel between forest areas, other animals  
17 have to travel between forest areas and when  
18 they're unsafe and can't do so because the  
19 forest is disconnected, then the biodiversity  
20 goes down and with biodiversity going down that  
21 causes measurable and negatively magnifying

1 affects over time for the area and residents  
2 nearby.

3 So I am ashamed of my university, to say  
4 the least. It's my home of going on six years  
5 of my young life because I stepped on  
6 Georgetown University's campus when I was 18 or  
7 19 in 2013 for undergrad and I stayed there, I  
8 work there, I know how it works from the  
9 inside.

10 And let me just say we had no idea as  
11 students and faculty that that was happening.  
12 It was kept in the dark. We didn't know until  
13 we found out in the news.

14 So to the heirs of the land being sold to  
15 Origis I say it's not guaranteed that Origis is  
16 correct. Listen to the people and the  
17 researchers that are in the room.

18 David Canter, Hughesville. I'm against  
19 this project. I hope you can deny the permit.  
20 I've been a supporter of the environment in  
21 Charles County for 15 years. During this time

1 I've seen Bonnie Beck, who you just met, a  
2 brilliant environmentalist and other former  
3 citizens of the county returning here to defend  
4 this county's environment. Those people have  
5 been criticized for that very purpose. Now an  
6 outsider's coming in to destroy part of our  
7 county from outside, why are we even  
8 considering this.

9 Brian Klass suggested the taxes be used  
10 for teachers, police and more. Look at the  
11 number he threw out, 1.2 million dollars over  
12 10 years. That tax is about good for one  
13 employee from that tax. Maybe he forgot about  
14 the so called employee burdened rates, benefits  
15 and retirement expenses. Project supporters  
16 stated, as I sat waiting, that this  
17 instillation create less impermeable surface  
18 than a single home. Technically this may have  
19 a bit of truth, but the failure in that  
20 statement is the flow rate of the water as it  
21 impacts the land. It will under hard and

1 repeated rain create trenching causing damage  
2 to the land. You can't justify doing good  
3 things by doing bad things. Think about it.  
4 They're cutting down forests to help the  
5 environmental. They're looking to cut down  
6 roughly 200 football fields for this project  
7 that includes the end zones.

8 Georgetown will not get the power  
9 generated by the solar farm. It will go into  
10 the grid. There is no power line going from  
11 Charles County to D.C., none. This is  
12 essentially a guilt driven approach to  
13 sustainability.

14 Anyone from the county in favor of this  
15 project has money in the game. They're either  
16 selling or leasing land or have connections to  
17 the project. The developer, Origis, is in  
18 Florida. So it's not like they're doing much  
19 to employ anyone locally.

20 Question: Why isn't Georgetown building  
21 their own rooftop systems and why aren't they

1 looking closer to D.C. One of the Maryland  
2 Solar 1 presenters said the stream impact would  
3 be unavoidable. It is. Just don't do it.

4 Seriously, they're cutting down forests to  
5 save the environment. This is bizarro world.  
6 Under normal circumstances the only thing that  
7 anybody needs to root against Georgetown is in  
8 basketball. These are not normal  
9 circumstances. This clear-cut should not be  
10 allowed to happen. Sorry Georgetown, I'm not  
11 rooting for you today or possibly ever again.  
12 I'm against this project. Please deny the  
13 permit, thank you.

14 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

15 My name is Nancy Shirtler. I live at  
16 14725 Bank City Road in Newburg, Maryland.  
17 Thank you for having this hearing tonight.  
18 Weighing the benefits of this project against  
19 the negative impacts is not a simple task and  
20 like us, communities across the country are  
21 grappling with assessing the cost benefit of

1 methods to address climate change.

2 I would like to add my name to the list of  
3 those that are concerned that Georgetown  
4 University, in its effort to fulfill its  
5 commitments to the American Campus Act on  
6 Climate will not be adopting best practices to  
7 promote sustainability through the contract with  
8 Solar 1. In their letter of support for this  
9 project the Charles County economic development  
10 states that Charles County will benefit from  
11 the distinction of being the home of  
12 cutting-edge energy production. Will the  
13 county also benefit with the distinction that  
14 we chose to produce this cutting-edge energy by  
15 clear-cutting and fragmenting our forests.

16 It has been noted that the property owner  
17 has the right to lumber this forest and  
18 clear-cut the property and that's true and it  
19 would result in fragmentation. However, a  
20 lumbered forest will naturally regenerate and  
21 with proper stewardship forest harvesting can

1 be used as positive tool to improve forest  
2 structure, health and genetics.

3 How do you provide stewardship for a solar  
4 farm? What best practices to promote  
5 sustainability will Solar 1 use to prevent  
6 national regrowth of trees and other vegetation  
7 from shading these panels and impeding access  
8 to transmission lines? Will they need to  
9 employ gas powered mowers to trim or will they  
10 apply herbicides to inhibit regrowth.

11 Currently there's at least one federal  
12 lawsuit filed which claims the manufacturer of  
13 grass killers had labels that falsely assured  
14 consumers that their products target an enzyme  
15 not found in people or pets. According to the  
16 suit, the active ingredient glyphosate attacks  
17 an enzyme also found in the beneficial  
18 intestinal bacteria of humans and some animals.  
19 Is it possible for MDE to ensure that if  
20 herbicides are going to be used they will not  
21 attack beneficial bacteria and organisms living

1 nearby or in the Tier II streams of Ward's Run?  
2 Will the state or county even know if Solar 1  
3 decides to use herbicides on a regularly  
4 scheduled basis to steward their solar fields.  
5 There is no question that we need to promote  
6 and development reusable energy. The question  
7 is do the best practices to promote  
8 sustainability require the fragmentation of a  
9 targeted ecological area in the valley of a  
10 Tier II stream. Thank you.

11 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Laurie Snow  
12 Aaron Ferber, John Gord and then Ben Hess.

13 My name is Laurie Snow and I live in  
14 Hughesville, Maryland. Full disclosure, I'm  
15 president of the Mattawoman Watershed Society  
16 which we'll submit separate comments in  
17 writing. I'm here on my own behalf making  
18 personal comments and asking you to deny this  
19 permit.

20 I come before you tonight because there's  
21 the disturbance in the forest. The disturbance

1 I come here to fight is not the regular logging  
2 trucks on Shugart Valley Place. This time when  
3 they cut down the trees they will replace them  
4 with metal ones and they're hot. They are set  
5 up all around the streams. This is the stream  
6 where the creatures of the forest come to drink  
7 and the clearing on the site 20 years ago made  
8 it easier for mom hawk to feed her baby. That  
9 clearing was fine but this is not a normal  
10 clearing in the forest. It's a hot spot, a  
11 permanent field of glass and metal surrounding  
12 two Tier II streams.

13 DNR has studied these streams for years  
14 and their latest on their index of biological  
15 integrity in this area is 3.67. The stream is  
16 part of the Nanjemoy watershed. When we plan  
17 experiments to monitor the decline of the  
18 Mattawoman, we compare it to our local control.  
19 The fully forested Nanjemoy watershed. This is  
20 the best case scenario in the rural metro  
21 interface that exists in Charles County. I am

1 so grateful for the peace and clean water this  
2 county offers.

3 Wells supply most of our drinking water  
4 and the aquifers rely on recharge. With double  
5 the rainfall this year you might think recharge  
6 isn't an issue but with more and more  
7 impervious surface in these watersheds, I can  
8 tell you that extra rain isn't sinking into the  
9 ground. It's rushing down culverts and  
10 gutters, mixing with sewage in the sewers and  
11 causing massive overflows into our beloved  
12 creeks.

13 While in the Nanjemoy watershed, that  
14 isn't a problem yet. It's the largest forest  
15 left in Southern Maryland. The site is the  
16 home to two Tier II streams that will be  
17 directly affected and healthy wetlands. It  
18 will make a 240 acre reflective hot zone in the  
19 middle of the largest Audubon important bird  
20 area in Maryland. Clear-cutting 250 acres of  
21 this forest to install 100,000 solar panels

1 should not fly in the face of our goals to  
2 protect our important ecological resources  
3 while we were in the midst of the sixth great  
4 mass extinction event on earth. This one human  
5 caused.

6 The site is designated as a targeted  
7 ecological area by the Maryland Department of  
8 Natural resources as an example of the valuable  
9 ecological land space targeted for  
10 conservation. The deforestation would  
11 currently expose adjacent bottomland hardwood  
12 forests along Ward's Run degrading the quality  
13 of the wetland and impacting the water quality  
14 of the Tier II streams from runoff and erosion,  
15 offering little cover for protection of  
16 wildlife. Wards Run, a tributary of Nanjemoy  
17 Creek. The positive contributor for  
18 restoration of the Nanjemoy dwarf wedge mussel  
19 population and I echo the comments of my  
20 previous speakers on that regard. Thank you.

21 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Eric Fisher,

1 John Ford, Ben Hahn and Linda Reading.

2 Good evening members of the department.

3 Mr. secretary, I'm Eric Fisher with the  
4 Chesapeake Bay Foundation. I'm their assistant  
5 director for our Maryland operations and also a  
6 certified land use planner. Thank you for the  
7 opportunity to comment on this permit  
8 application.

9 We are here tonight on behalf of our 1,600  
10 members in Charles County and those of us who  
11 live downstream. Georgetown University's goal  
12 clean energy is noble. Climate change is a  
13 pressing challenge and action is not always  
14 easy, but we believe that some choices are  
15 clear. More than 700 CBF members have  
16 contacted your office on this project because  
17 they understand that clear-cutting hundreds of  
18 acres of high-value forest does not move us  
19 forward, it sets us back.

20 This forest is located in a rural  
21 conservation zone. It is located in a priority

1 preservation area. It is located in a targeted  
2 ecological area. It is located in Tier II  
3 high-quality watershed. It is the filter for  
4 Ward's Run and its wetlands. A significant  
5 portion of the total listed segment abuts this  
6 site. Edge of field impacts will be in stream  
7 impacts for this project. Mixed open land,  
8 which is what will be left behind, loads  
9 phosphorous at a rate five times higher than  
10 forest. It loads twice higher than harvested  
11 forest. It loads 40 times higher than forest  
12 during construction. This is your model. This  
13 includes the use of erosion and sediment  
14 controls. There can be no mistake that a solar  
15 field is a high-impact use on a site that was  
16 once a forest.

17 The forests and wetlands on this site are  
18 ecologically linked. We appreciate that you  
19 will be considering deforestation in your  
20 review. We also believe that you have a  
21 responsibility under the Clean Water Act to

1 ensure these waters are not degraded. We  
2 believe that responsibility persists  
3 complimentary to but not in place by your  
4 non-tidal wetlands regulations.

5 The amount of clearing on this site risks  
6 degradation on its face and MDE must weigh the  
7 value of ecosystem services, including natural  
8 storm water management that currently exists  
9 against the proposal for this project. CBF has  
10 not seen compelling evidence that these impacts  
11 have been measured, let alone accounted for.

12 We will offer your office written comments  
13 with further details on these points, but the  
14 bottom line is that we can and must do better  
15 than a choice between clean energy and clean  
16 water. We ask the applicant and we ask  
17 Georgetown University to find a new site and we  
18 respectfully request that MDE deny this permit.  
19 Thank you.

20 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. John  
21 Hungerford. Ben Hahn and Linda Reading.

1           Thank you for the opportunity to address  
2 this board. John Hungerford. I represent --  
3 I'm an attorney. I represent the Stuart  
4 family, which basically one half of the  
5 ownership of this property.

6           My clients have been waiting for close to  
7 10 years to be able get their interest and  
8 there's a number of us, not just one or two  
9 people between both sides of this family,  
10 there's I think eight or 10 all together that  
11 have been waiting through this county, going  
12 through zoning procedures, trying to figure out  
13 what could be done with this property. The  
14 board lost several contracts they could have  
15 had, they basically could have realized their  
16 inheritance. This is just the most recent  
17 holdup.

18           My understanding what we're here today is  
19 for you folks to consider the propriety of  
20 granting a wetlands permit under established  
21 procedures, not to go through all these

1 policies issues about whether there should be  
2 economic development, whether we should be  
3 cutting down trees or anything else.

4 The fact is that my clients can and  
5 actually had considered having the remainder of  
6 this property forested. And there's a mining  
7 company that was also interested in coming in  
8 and doing gravel mining. Those types of uses,  
9 which they're absolutely permitted to do, would  
10 have caused serious impact to the surroundings.  
11 If they can't go forward with this, they really  
12 have very few opportunities other than those  
13 two and/or development. You put the number of  
14 houses that they would be permitted to do to  
15 put a development in this and you've got even  
16 more impervious surfaces, something like 10 or  
17 20 times more than what this will generate.

18 I have been to previous hearings before  
19 the Planning Commission and the other  
20 commissions, I have listened to the scientific  
21 evidence, the engineering studies, everything

1 that's been presented, and at every one of  
2 those it was presented that this is going to be  
3 very minimal impact to the area and, as has  
4 been indicated, I think something close to  
5 two-thirds of the property, 270 acres, is going  
6 to be permanently preserved.

7 To address one lady's concern up here  
8 about old growth trees being destroyed. This  
9 property was essentially farmland throughout  
10 the vast majority of its history. It has been  
11 timbered in the past. The majority of the  
12 timber that's on that property is actually not  
13 old growth timber but relatively new impervious  
14 surfaces timber. We actually, several years  
15 ago, hired a forester, a licensed forester, to  
16 come evaluate what could be done and he  
17 actually recommended not foresting it because  
18 most of the trees that were there really hadn't  
19 matured.

20 So we're basically in a situation where my  
21 clients have economic opportunities that they

1 could pursue. This is a win-win. The vast  
2 majority of this property is going to be  
3 preserved. And as I say, they've been waiting  
4 a great deal of time to be able to do something  
5 with their property. We shouldn't be here  
6 debating policy issues. This is an allowable  
7 use of the land and they should be allowed to  
8 pursue it. Thank you.

9 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

10 Good evening. My name is Ben Hahn 45547  
11 Sumpter Drive, Great Mills, Maryland 20634. I  
12 have the honor tonight of speaking for the  
13 Sierra Club Maryland Chapter. Sierra Club is a  
14 national grassroots environmental organization  
15 with 60,000 members and supports in Maryland  
16 and 5,000 members supported right here in  
17 Southern Maryland.

18 The Sierra Club believes in the expansion  
19 of renewable energy and supports the growth of  
20 solar power in Maryland and beyond so long as  
21 it is sighted in a responsible and sustainable

1 way. And I would like to repeat that one more  
2 time, responsible and sustainable. We have  
3 serious, serious concerns about this project  
4 because of its impact on targeted ecological  
5 area and Audubon important bird area and an  
6 area whose economic benefit to Charles County  
7 amounts to \$586,000 a year.

8 We believe that we must address the threat  
9 to Tier II streams on the property and the  
10 utmost concern must be given to the  
11 preservation of the Nanjemoy watershed. Once  
12 more, it is concerning that the supporters are  
13 threatening if you don't let us cut down the  
14 forest to do one thing, we'll just cut it down  
15 and do even worse. And I want you to think  
16 about that. If one side is threatening and the  
17 other side is asking nicely, who are the good  
18 guys. But more to the point, solar is the way  
19 of the future, that is without a doubt, and we  
20 admire Georgetown for their resolution to  
21 minimize their carbon footnote, but I feel with

1 the lack of visibility that the facility and  
2 students were given, that this is not actually  
3 representing the spirit of that commitment that  
4 Georgetown has made. And it certainly does not  
5 represent a sustainable and responsible method  
6 for the growth of reliable sustainable  
7 renewable energy in Maryland and beyond, thank  
8 you.

9 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Linda Reading,  
10 then Richard Carol, then Dianna Wheeler and  
11 Kyle Harman.

12 Good evening. My name is Linda Reading  
13 and I live in Nanjemoy. I want to include  
14 everyone on what the property's trustee has  
15 known since last summer, that a major land  
16 trust is interested in the purchase and  
17 preservation of the parcel. However, Origis'  
18 option to purchase keeps getting extended.

19 Looking at the photo showing the  
20 configuration of the solar array, that says it  
21 all. That parcel is completely inappropriate.

1 It is -- they went out and chose the most  
2 inappropriate parcel for this project. Half of  
3 the parcel is 15 to 40 percent slopes and,  
4 well, but it's okay because we got butterflies,  
5 we're going to get butterflies. And not only  
6 that, we got some unicorns pooping rainbows  
7 because Origis says it's going to actually  
8 improve the parcel and the impacts are going to  
9 stay on site in defiance of physics. And most  
10 magically of all, the solar installation is  
11 going to function hydrologically as a forest.  
12 I mean, it just gets better all the time. And,  
13 why.

14 This is an exercise in extraction. This  
15 is a foreign company, and, I mean, if you  
16 follow the LLCs all that way up, it's out of  
17 the country of Cypress, that's coming in here  
18 and extracting our resources because it costs  
19 them too much to put it in an appropriate  
20 location, which translation means that it cuts  
21 into their profit so we will eventually bear

1 the cost, our Ward's Run and our Nanjemoy Creek  
2 will be full of sediment because, I forgot  
3 about the butterflies, I'm okay now.

4 This is just -- I never thought I'd be  
5 fighting a solar project because I just didn't  
6 have that kind of imagination that people would  
7 be cutting down forest to put up solar  
8 projects, but as another Nanjemoy resident  
9 said, we had several six-inch rain falls, when  
10 you put a 100,000 little tiny roofs on 200  
11 acres and we get 22 million gallons of  
12 rainfall, that is going to wipe out that  
13 stream. And as someone else said, we do  
14 recreate there and we do eat the fish and we do  
15 eat the crabs and I want those to still be  
16 available, but I also don't want them  
17 contaminated with weed killer. I don't want to  
18 be eating that stuff either.

19 So forests are necessary to stop climate  
20 change. I guess Origis cannot read the  
21 intergovernmental panel on climate change.

1 There will be need to be an increase in global  
2 forest cover equal to the land area of Canada  
3 by the year 2050. We talk about forests  
4 because they protect streams.

5 Hello, my name is Richard Carroll and I  
6 came down to from Baltimore. The other day I  
7 got an e-mail from David Kerzod in Maryland,  
8 D.C. Audubon, and after getting up to speed on  
9 this project, decided I wanted to make a brief  
10 comment.

11 First of all, I've been preceded by many  
12 extremely well-informed articulate and eloquent  
13 people. I'm going to keep this very short.  
14 There's an old saying that what happens in  
15 Vegas stays in Vegas. Well, what happens in  
16 Nanjemoy, Charles County, doesn't stay in  
17 Charles County. The whole ecosystem is  
18 connected. What happens there will impact the  
19 bay. It will impact neotropical migrants that  
20 go thousands of miles. And the point that's  
21 been made repeatedly by people is that you can

1 be an enthusiastic support of solar, which I  
2 am, a hundred percent source my electricity  
3 from solar energy, but there is a better way to  
4 site this project. I implore the MDE not to  
5 grant this permit and I hope that the  
6 corporation pursuing this will find a suitable  
7 place because we need solar energy and we need  
8 forests, thank you.

9 Hello, my name is Dianna Wheeler, 1393  
10 Liverpool Point Road, Nanjemoy, Maryland.

11 Thank you for having this hearing.

12 I'm representing Nanjemoy Potomac  
13 Environmental Coalition and for the first part.  
14 It seems like you've heard a lot, Tier II  
15 streams continuous forests, RC zones, important  
16 bird areas, dwarf wedge mussels, all these are  
17 the same arguments that defeated another  
18 project in 2000 against Maryland Rock when they  
19 wanted to clear-cut land in Nanjemoy. We have  
20 the evidence, the science is already there, we  
21 have the research that shows that these are

1 very important and will degrade the watershed.

2 Now as a citizen, I'd like to talk a  
3 little bit about being a science teacher. I'm  
4 an elementary science teach. I teach 350  
5 students. Interestingly enough in past two  
6 days we have covered all these subjects.

7 Today, over a 110 students built solar ovens  
8 because they realized that renewable energy is  
9 important and that's one way we can do it.

10 Another 125 students today realized the  
11 importance of recharge areas. If you cut down  
12 the trees, it's very hard to recharge the  
13 aquifers that we need for our own water.

14 Yesterday another 120 students modeled what  
15 happens when you clear-cut land. They stood up  
16 as trees and they had students run through the  
17 trees and then we cut trees down the students  
18 ran and they realized that the timing of the  
19 water running off the land was significantly  
20 changed when there were no trees. So my fourth  
21 graders and fifth graders get it. They

1 understand the importance of renewable energy  
2 and at the same time they understand that we  
3 need forests for recharge, we need to keep  
4 trees to decrease the runoff so the streams  
5 have less erosion so, anyways, great idea  
6 Georgetown, wrong location, thank you.

7 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you, Kyle Harman.

8 My name's Kyle Harman. I'm a member of  
9 Nanticoke Indian tribe, which was originally  
10 located on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Now  
11 we have been moved to Millsborough, Delaware  
12 and everywhere else in the world due to  
13 colonization.

14 Our whole being as native people has been  
15 based off the seven generations principle.  
16 Every decision is made, I know within my  
17 community and many other communities that I  
18 visited, is based off how that will impact the  
19 next seven generations. So when I have the  
20 Piscataway people, particularly our Piscataway  
21 women, that send a call out for help, we come

1 and we support our women.

2 This project, having doing research on it,  
3 is not conducive to what Georgetown University  
4 is supposed to represent. My wife is a alumnus  
5 of Georgetown University, absolutely disgusted  
6 by this, disgusted that there was no input put  
7 towards of alumni and being significant donors  
8 to the university, but as you have seen,  
9 particularly in Southern Maryland, industry  
10 that allows for deforestation has been  
11 devastating to your community. Look what  
12 happened with the tobacco fields. They came  
13 over, they exploited a resource that has been  
14 sacred to us for thousands of years and it  
15 ruined our fields.

16 You look at the waterways. When will the  
17 big industries understand that without clean  
18 water there's no life. Native people are water  
19 protectors. We stand up for the land. We care  
20 about the land. The land is part of us.  
21 Ownership, fencing, none of that stuff was

1 practiced prior to colonization.

2 So we ask how many more times do we have  
3 to make major mistakes before we realize that  
4 maybe the native perspective that has been here  
5 for well over 16,000 years may have something  
6 to do with it. When is big industries and  
7 prominent University's going to say, hey, why  
8 don't we show respect to the local indigenous  
9 people and see if they want to be involved in  
10 this project. Let's see their living  
11 conditions. Why don't we approach minority  
12 people and see how can we help them, how we can  
13 help the disenfranchised, those that don't have  
14 a voice. These are questions that I asked.

15 Now we have to fight this fight because we  
16 missed some steps in the way, but I ask that  
17 you deny this permit based on the fact that  
18 there are plenty other options that we can  
19 utilize.

20 The technology with solar energy is  
21 profound. They have window panels that you can

1 use to create solar energy. There's rooftops.  
2 There's farmland that's already been cleared.  
3 There's industrial sites that people talked  
4 about. The gravel pit was a good idea. I ask  
5 that you find alternative motives to the land  
6 owners, I know some of them have already left,  
7 but there's plenty of other ways to get money  
8 off of your land. There's hundred year leases  
9 that you can sign with the native people to  
10 help you learn how to use the land.

11 That's a way of giving back. And you can  
12 give me this three minute thing all you want,  
13 but I've seen people come and take more time.  
14 I will take more time. I'll just be honest  
15 with you.

16 Far too long we do have setback and we've  
17 seen people not respect the land, we've seen  
18 governments not respect the land. You have  
19 people that have been here for thousands of  
20 years that are telling you you have to do a  
21 better job and that there's ways to do it and

1 there's education that can be involved with it  
2 and we ask that you respect that and we ask  
3 that people of Georgetown University demand  
4 change. Thank you.

5 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

6 My name is Ann Lewis. I'm president of  
7 City Wildlife in Washington, D.C. I live at  
8 3200 Reservoir Road, NW in Washington, one  
9 block from Georgetown University.

10 We have serious concerns about the  
11 location of this project, even though we  
12 commend Georgetown for its efforts to create  
13 renewable energy sources. The project's  
14 originator, Origis, is justifying this project  
15 on the basis of carbon sequestration, but that  
16 is only one aspect of the value of these  
17 woodlands and it negates all the other aspects.  
18 Justifying this project solely on the basis of  
19 carbon sequestration is a flawed analysis.

20 Nanjemoy is well-known for its  
21 biodiversity and exceptional wildlife habitat.

1 It's also an important economic generator for  
2 the county and I speak to that as a summerer in  
3 Nanjemoy for six years with my family.

4 It's a destination for birders,  
5 naturalists, scientists and specialists and  
6 environmental research. The Nature Conservancy  
7 and The Audubon Society have both identified  
8 the area as prime conservation area, in part  
9 because of its large amount of contiguous  
10 forests. The Nature Conservancy deems Nanjemoy  
11 one of Maryland's most pristine watersheds and  
12 states that this remarkable situation exists,  
13 in part, because the landscape has not been  
14 fragmented yet as it has in other places.  
15 Likewise, The Audubon Society identifies the  
16 area as the green thumb of southwestern Charles  
17 County because of its large block of contiguous  
18 forest. This is the exceptional biodiversity  
19 and uninterrupted forest habitat that supports  
20 it are why Nanjemoy is so unusual and  
21 considered so valuable by so many people.

1           Forests also contributes to water quality.  
2           And I'd like to submit two documents for the  
3           record. My testimony's already part of the  
4           record, but the two documents are the value of  
5           forest conservation for water quality  
6           protection. It's a footnote in my testimony.  
7           And the other is a document from Canada on the  
8           complexities of -- it's called lessons learned,  
9           solar projects present unique storm water  
10          management challenges. And if you want to read  
11          difficulties, read this.

12          If implemented, this project and the  
13          decision making process that enabled it would  
14          set a dangerous precedent locally and  
15          nationally by targeting forested areas rather  
16          than areas already developed as suitable sites  
17          for large solar farms. Over time this could  
18          result in a significant reduction of much of  
19          our nation's forested land as well as the many  
20          benefits that woodlands provide.

21          MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

1 My name is Mary Rooker. I'm a member of  
2 the Maryland Green Party, which we'll submit  
3 separate written comments. I came from Takoma  
4 Park, north of D.C., because what you do here  
5 affects me in Takoma Park. It affects the  
6 9,000 plus registered greens in the whole state  
7 of Maryland. It even affects the country and  
8 the world.

9 As is my custom, I wish to open my remarks  
10 by acknowledging the land and its ancestors.  
11 So I honor the Piscataway ancestors of this  
12 land of the last 10,000 years plus and their  
13 descendents who are still here today.

14 The green parties four pillars are  
15 democracy, peace, social justice and, you  
16 guessed it, environmental wisdom. The green  
17 party is likely the strongest supporter you can  
18 find of solar power and yet we oppose the Solar  
19 1 project. An alternative site must be found  
20 that does not damage the environmental, nor  
21 contribute to climate change, as this one does.

1           Fragmenting of forest is one of the most  
2 destructive things you can do to a habitat. It  
3 cannot recover and dies slowly. The proposed  
4 destruction of this forest land harms a  
5 targeted ecological area that is home to two  
6 quality streams, habitat, biodiversity and  
7 wildlife. The stream and wetlands workarounds  
8 mentioned in the presentation fail to protect  
9 those waters because you cannot meaningfully  
10 separate the waters from the land and trees.  
11 Altering the trees harms and alters the waters.  
12 It's called atrophic cascade. When we harm an  
13 ecosystem, we also harm human beings. We ask  
14 that you instant on a suitable location and  
15 reject the current proposal.

16           We need more trees and forests, not fewer.  
17 We need reforestation, not deforestation.  
18 Coming from the D.C. area I know how precious  
19 and valuable these forests are. I hope you  
20 cherish what you have here. Please don't take  
21 this sacred land for granted. Thank you.

1           Good evening. My name is Hal Delaplain of  
2           La Plata and I'm speaking on behalf of the  
3           Conservancy for Charles County, a charitable  
4           non-profit land trust dedicated to preserving  
5           the rural character and natural assets of the  
6           county for the benefit of the general public.

7           Thank you for holding this permit hearing  
8           tonight. While there is rightful concern with  
9           stream and wetland disturbance which while  
10          small an area is not trivial, what really  
11          disturbs us is clear-cutting more than 200  
12          acres of upland and bottomland hardwoods on a  
13          537 acre track with more than 100 feet of  
14          topographic relief and steep slopes down to a  
15          high-quality stream, Ward's Run. The result  
16          would be a significant fragmentation of the  
17          Nanjemoy Mattawoman forest hub and greenway  
18          that would be inconsistent with the Charles  
19          County's 2016 comprehensive plan.

20          The applicant belittles the quality of  
21          this forest. True, the forest on this tract is

1 immature because of past logging, but that  
2 doesn't affect its function as a forest. The  
3 parcel is a targeted ecological area meaning it  
4 is among the best of the best for preservation.

5 The Department of Natural Resources green  
6 print assessed its conservation benefits and  
7 gave it five stars out of for habitat  
8 connectivity, rare species and wildlife habitat  
9 and proximity to protected lands.

10 Further in assessing its carbon  
11 sequestration, wildlife habitat and  
12 biodiversity, storm water mitigation, ground  
13 water recharge, nitrogen uptake and air  
14 pollutants removed, green print values the  
15 property's ecosystem services at \$624,133 per  
16 year. It does not appear any attempted  
17 alternative analysis has been made to avoid  
18 damaging this landscape. Instead, the  
19 applicant relied on a special exception process  
20 that not only excluded public input but also  
21 neglected to inform the public. Some are

1 projects that need hundreds of acres of land  
2 amount to a major power plant and should be  
3 subject to comparable siting considerations  
4 and public process.

5 According to the comp plan, there are more  
6 than 2700 acres of extractive or barren land in  
7 the county. It would make sense to look here  
8 first. What about landowner's rights.

9 Obviously a mechanism's needed to provide a  
10 source of income for landowners as compensation  
11 for preserving essential ecosystem services.  
12 Perhaps something similar to the conservation  
13 reserve program might work.

14 Maryland cannot afford to stand by and  
15 allow a gold rush mentality to wreak havoc on  
16 competing societal needs for clean renewable  
17 energy and the preservation of green  
18 infrastructure and prime farmland. We need  
19 urgent action to resolve such land use  
20 conflicts. In the meantime, I ask Georgetown  
21 University to take responsibility and move this

1 plant to a more appropriate location.

2 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

3 Good evening. I'm Steve Brenner. I live  
4 in Waldorf, Maryland. I own 75 acres in  
5 Nanjemoy. It's in the forest conservation  
6 program. The state of Maryland has a forest  
7 conservation program which seems to be run as  
8 an alternative to allow developers to cut down  
9 trees elsewhere. Waldorf has been clear-cut  
10 thousands and thousands of acres over the last  
11 40 years since I moved down here. I found out  
12 about this program by watching Channel 7 News  
13 and Georgetown came up for discussion and they  
14 said they were going to clear all these woods.  
15 This was a week after I watched a well-known  
16 national news person find out that her ancestor  
17 had been sold in Port Tobacco by Georgetown,  
18 sold south. So Georgetown hasn't had a very  
19 good week in Charles County. That ancestor was  
20 born in Port Tobacco. This previous fellow  
21 mentioned Port Tobacco. Port Tobacco used to

1 be a deep water port in colonial days. You can  
2 walk across the creek in Port Tobacco now  
3 because of all the erosion, all the soil in  
4 Charles County that washed into Port Tobacco  
5 Creek. You could see the same kind of affect  
6 happening in Nanjemoy, if you start cutting  
7 down all the trees there.

8 So I'd just like to point out that we've  
9 been through this. You can see what happened  
10 to Port Tobacco. We don't need this to be  
11 happening again in the Nanjemoy area. And my  
12 75 acres is going so stay wooded, even though  
13 it cost me a fortune to keep it that way, but  
14 I'm all for wildlife and not for clearing  
15 trees, thank you.

16 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

17 Thank you very much. I want to thank  
18 everybody who's here, because it's like the  
19 cream of the crop, as far as I'm concerned.

20 People standing up for forests, it's  
21 something that we all need to do. We need to

1 take recognition that the areas that we are  
2 familiar with and that we -- our territory, we  
3 need to protect it. And I want to special  
4 thanks to the native people that are here  
5 tonight because it's just your land that we are  
6 discussing here from the past. And it's so  
7 important to have your voice here tonight. We  
8 really appreciate it. And I want to thank you,  
9 MDE, for holding this hearing because this  
10 project slipped by and people did not know  
11 about it and we're very thankful that we have  
12 this opportunity.

13 I would like the permit to be denied. I  
14 don't want -- MDE is in a critical perspective  
15 here because they can't stop until there are  
16 regulations which I do support, it will open up  
17 and green light solar in appropriate places.  
18 Paul Penskey has legislature that would be  
19 very, very helpful but it's not in effect yet  
20 and so this land needs to be preserved and  
21 there's an opportunity to preserve it. And I

1 appeal to the heirs to switch from this deal  
2 that is actually -- all the information hasn't  
3 been presented. I was at the Board of Appeals  
4 and there was misinformation presented. I  
5 think it's admirable that Georgetown wants to  
6 meet their sustainable energy goals, but they  
7 have an opportunity to find a different company  
8 or to get this company to do the right thing.

9 But also it would be wonderful if they  
10 would partnership with the conservation group  
11 that would like to purchase this property  
12 because we would like to have Georgetown and  
13 the Smithsonian feel that this area below  
14 Washington is a benefit to them and to help  
15 protect it. So I really think that that's a  
16 great opportunity for the future.

17 And I would also like to say that we're  
18 all working together and our mission is to save  
19 Ward's Run, Nanjemoy Creek, the Potomac River  
20 the Mattawoman, which is amazing because I live  
21 to save Mattawoman, the Mattawoman and the

1 Chesapeake Bay and I thank you for taking such  
2 a serious look at this issue, thank you.

3 MS. SIGILLITO: David Carson.

4 Good evening. My name is David Carson and  
5 I'm the director of Bird Conservation and  
6 interim executive director of Audubon Maryland  
7 D.C. We have around 23,000 members in the  
8 state, 411 of which live in Charles County.

9 So Audubon opposes the solar project in  
10 this particular place. We urge MDE to deny the  
11 permit for it. We're not against solar power  
12 per se. In fact, we're very much in favor of  
13 it and we applaud Georgetown University for  
14 pursuing solar power to reduce its carbon  
15 footprint. We recognize that climate change is  
16 one of the gravest long-term threats to birds  
17 and people and we believe that developing  
18 renewable energy sources like solar is an  
19 essential strategy to combat climate change,  
20 but we oppose the project because it's simply  
21 to the wrong place and it will cause

1 significant ecological damage to the two Tier  
2 II streams on the property and also to the  
3 largest forested landscape remaining in  
4 Southern Maryland.

5 This forested landscape, we have  
6 identified as Nanjemoy important bird area and  
7 we identify it because it has a really highly  
8 significant community of forest interior  
9 dwelling species of bird and also to keep the  
10 population of six at risk bird species Bald  
11 Eagle, Whipper Will, Wood Thrush Prairie  
12 Wobbler, and Worm Eating Wobbler.

13 So the ecological damage needed to install  
14 the solar panels for the project is just not  
15 acceptable. We have heard about the clearance  
16 of 240 acres of forest and the fragmentation  
17 affects of that and we've also heard about the  
18 need to grade and bulldoze the land, which will  
19 cause a lot of runoff and sedimentation into  
20 the streams.

21 It's difficult to imagine a worse place to

1 put this project and it's difficult to  
2 understand how the site was selected. This  
3 level of ecological damage is totally  
4 unnecessary because there are so many more  
5 suitable sites across the state, even in  
6 Charles County as we've heard other people say.

7 I also want to say that of all the issues  
8 that I've been involved with working with  
9 Audubon, this one's attracted more comment and  
10 passion than most others and I think it's  
11 because people in Maryland are pinning a lot of  
12 hope on developing renewable power to slow down  
13 climate change and they really care that it's  
14 done right. We need to get the siting of these  
15 projects done correctly right now because  
16 there's going to be a lot more similar projects  
17 coming along in the future, thank you.

18 I'm Kathleen Brokey. I request that you  
19 allow Dr. Gabby Tayack to speak in my place to  
20 allow as many members of the indigenous  
21 community and the Piscataway people to speak,

1 thank you.

2 Good evening. And thank you for providing  
3 this opportunity for me to absolutely oppose  
4 the Shugart Valley solar project. My name is  
5 Dr. Gabrielle Tayack. I am a Piscataway woman  
6 and a Harvard trained scholar specializing in  
7 the indigenous history of our home land, which  
8 includes the precious location now poised for  
9 destruction due to the misguided and  
10 irresponsible plans laid out by Georgetown  
11 University and the Origis Solar Company.

12 For informational purposes only, I would  
13 like you to know that I was an historian at the  
14 Smithsonian for 18 years. I educated millions  
15 of people about the history and culture and  
16 identity of our people and this beautiful  
17 homeland that's here in Charles County.

18 The project will only add to the more than  
19 400 years of exploitation and degradation of  
20 our lands, our culture and our  
21 self-determination. Nobody in this project

1 consulted the tribes. I would remind you that  
2 the Piscataway tribes are officially recognized  
3 by the state of Maryland. Our traditional  
4 tribal area stretches from the area around  
5 Great Falls all the way down to Point Lookout  
6 between the Potomac and the Patuxent River and  
7 I would like to say that my tribe is located  
8 primarily here and I am a resident of Takoma  
9 Park, Maryland.

10 At the time of European contact our  
11 chiefdom included dozens of tribes and we lived  
12 in an environment composed of 95 percent old  
13 growth forest, abundant agricultural fields,  
14 which I might add were controlled by women, and  
15 deep clear waterways unaffected by erosion that  
16 comes from the vast deforestation that is now  
17 being planned.

18 About 90 percent of our population was  
19 decimated by disease, displacement and racism.  
20 Our reservation lands here were taken over  
21 without our consent. With all that we've gone

1 through, we are still here and our cultures are  
2 revitalizing. And I would like to point out  
3 that the woodlands are revitalizing. It is  
4 secondary growth in most places but those are  
5 coming back. And all of our animal relatives  
6 are coming back and that's a beautiful thing  
7 and we don't want to waste that again.

8 We are in a very vulnerable time in our  
9 country again. We are on the verge of another  
10 environmental catastrophe and much our natural  
11 world which has some time to recover is now  
12 being threatened due to climate change and  
13 unrestrained development. We don't want more  
14 in the face of an institution which actually  
15 still holds one of the most precious things our  
16 language and for them to be involved in taking  
17 away again of our lands, our culture, our  
18 environment, our relatives, our history and our  
19 identity, please do not allow this, don't  
20 repeat this mistake again. Thank you.

21 Good evening. Thank you for the

1 opportunity to testify tonight. My name is  
2 Valerie Proctor and I'm a lifelong residence of  
3 what is current considered Charles County,  
4 Maryland. And I am a member of the Cedarville  
5 Band of Piscataway.

6 I strongly oppose the deforestation of  
7 over 200 acres of forest for the installation  
8 of Georgetown University and Origis 32 megawatt  
9 solar project. I want to be clear that I am in  
10 full support of the university creating a solar  
11 project to power their campus. However, I  
12 strongly oppose the location of this project,  
13 because it's in a community that was never  
14 consulted before the proposal. We will not be  
15 benefiting from the project here in Southern  
16 Maryland. This is for Georgetown University,  
17 not Southern Maryland. And this is my  
18 ancestral homelands, which my people have  
19 fought so hard for and so many have died for  
20 and have shed their blood, sweat and tears for  
21 and we have shared with you all for centuries

1 and we just ask that you take care of it and  
2 clear-cutting more trees is not protecting it  
3 and it's over 200 acres of it, which are in a  
4 targeted ecological area, a TEA. And I have a  
5 bone to pick with the county, why would you  
6 even consider this a TEA if you're not going TO  
7 keep it protected.

8           Anyway, despite the importance of this  
9 forest to the ecosystem of Southern Maryland  
10 and to the Piscataway community, Georgetown and  
11 Origis have not consulted the tribe in the  
12 process thus far. This is shocking,  
13 considering that three prior and enforced  
14 consent for indigenous community is an  
15 internationally recognized human right  
16 standard. Not only were we not consulted  
17 neither were any of the Charles County  
18 residents. Just because this is a private  
19 piece of property does not mean it will not  
20 affect the others around it. This is a  
21 community and those of us -- for those of you

1 who own the land, I realize this is your  
2 property and you need to do something with it  
3 but we need you to please understand that this  
4 is the responsibility you hold and you hold  
5 such a precious piece of land and it's not just  
6 a piece of land, it's an ecosystem.

7 I support Georgetown's interest in solar  
8 infrastructure development, but I fail to see  
9 why it must happen in the destruction of forest  
10 land. Georgetown and Origis are encouraged to  
11 find other alternative sites, for instance,  
12 abandoned farmland that farmers could use as a  
13 cash crop, maybe in other counties like Carroll  
14 County, for example.

15 Again, I want renewable energy in Maryland  
16 but not at the expense of my indigenous  
17 ancestral homelands. I'm deeply disappointed  
18 to see some of the same remnants of the same  
19 extractivist model used by the fossil fuel  
20 industry for years already creeping its way  
21 into renewable energy development and Origis

1 should be embarrassed. We should not have to  
2 choose between one or the other, nature or  
3 renewables. We can and should have both. We  
4 deserve it. I'm thinking of the next seven  
5 generations, are you all?

6 Good evening. As you mentioned, I'm Dave  
7 Wilson. I'm actually from Berlin. I drove  
8 three and a half hours to be here. This is  
9 that important to me.

10 First, I'd like to thank you, MDE and  
11 Secretary Grumbles for holding this hearing.  
12 It's a very important part of the public  
13 process. It's important that this be a public  
14 process. And thank you to all the four of you  
15 for hanging in there.

16 Just for some background, I'm the former  
17 executive director of the Maryland Coastal Base  
18 Program, it's a national estuary program that's  
19 based in Berlin, Maryland, where I worked for  
20 18 years and where I also chaired the Coastal  
21 Base Forestry Advisory Committee. I work at

1 DNR and the Maryland amphibian and reptile  
2 atlas and the breeding bird atlas, where I  
3 logged over 2,000 hours in the field and I  
4 subsequently helped write the conservation  
5 actions for the reptiles amphibians and for the  
6 bird sections in the 2015 Maryland State  
7 Wildlife Action Plan.

8 Since this is a wetland hearing I'm going  
9 to be a good testifier and say that I think the  
10 degradations to the wetlands and the runoff  
11 impacts to the nearby Tier II streams are  
12 unacceptable and, therefore, this permit should  
13 be denied. I'd also like to add this would  
14 also set a very disturbing precedent in the  
15 state of Maryland for cutting down woods to put  
16 in solar panels.

17 I'd like to also say that this Georgetown  
18 University proposal flies in the face of all  
19 the forest restoration work that the state and  
20 non-profits across that do pretty much every  
21 day for everything from box turtles to Scarlet

1 Tanagers.

2 The biggest problem east coast birds,  
3 reptiles and amphibians have is the loss of  
4 contiguous forest habitat. Why do you reduce  
5 greenhouse gasses if you're going to destroy  
6 the habitat of the species you're trying to  
7 save. Greenhouse gas calculations are  
8 important but they're not all that matter.  
9 When it comes to cutting giant holes in a few  
10 intact forest complexes left in the state, the  
11 number crunching is meaningless.

12 I got my undergraduate degree from Penn  
13 State University and I have a Master's Degree  
14 from Boston College and I can't imagine any of  
15 those institutions ever being as poorly versed  
16 in wildlife biodiversity and conservation in  
17 general as Georgetown University is in this  
18 case. And the Florida based Origis energy's  
19 droning on about property rights and false  
20 tradeoffs in the media doesn't make it any  
21 easier to swallow how Georgetown University

1 ever got into bed with such an enterprise.

2 It's easy to see Origis energy's blind  
3 financial incentive but it's hard to comprehend  
4 Georgetown University calculous on their  
5 institutions reputation.

6 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Jessica  
7 Proctor.

8 Good evening. Thank you for the  
9 opportunity to testify. My name is Jessica  
10 Proctor and I grew up in Charles County and I  
11 have lived here for nearly all of my life. I  
12 am and always have been connected to this land,  
13 as I am, too, a member of the Cedarville Band  
14 Piscataway people.

15 Pollution has toxified our air, water and  
16 land more and more each day. We are hurting  
17 for clean energy practices and for corporations  
18 to take a movement toward clean energy more  
19 seriously. We've seen our trees become rapidly  
20 wiped out by hundreds of acres over the past 15  
21 years for housing developments, gas stations,

1 shopping centers and now what I hope would  
2 never happen, solar farms.

3 Just like the fossil fuel industry has  
4 bulldozed farms for decades, we are now  
5 beginning to see those same disgusting and  
6 disheartening practices from the renewable  
7 energy sector. There doesn't seem to have been  
8 any consideration from Georgetown University or  
9 Origis for the ramifications of wiping out  
10 hundreds of acres of ancestral homelands of the  
11 Piscataway people and homelands of wildlife  
12 within this forest.

13 Actually by doing a quick Google search,  
14 it seems that Origis has a history of choosing  
15 controversial sites and wiping out tons of  
16 trees in the process and endangering endangered  
17 species even further. Georgetown University  
18 I'm sure has many brilliant minds like those  
19 from the green organization here with us  
20 tonight and others in your student body who I'm  
21 sure agree with us and would likely be willing

1 to find an alternative to killing trees and  
2 wildlife to build this solar farm. There are  
3 plenty of lands that have already been  
4 deforested that would make much more sense to  
5 use. And the environmental benefits to Charles  
6 County from wiping out our trees and our source  
7 of oxygen and for clean energy to leave our  
8 state, our community and be transferred to  
9 Georgetown just to better your image to your  
10 university, there's no benefits for us.

11 Although you'd be leaving the roots system  
12 there, it will likely produce a carbon  
13 emissions to deforest the site, install the  
14 solar farm and maintain the area. It's a crude  
15 display of conspicuous consumption and a  
16 blatant disregard to the wishes of the  
17 Piscataway people, thank you.

18 I'm Angela Barns. I'm here representing  
19 the Accokeek Foundation, a non-profit that's  
20 located in Southern Prince George's County. I  
21 also would like to note that I'm a long time

1 Charles County resident, as well a member of  
2 Piscataway Cedarville Band.

3 In addition to the ecological impacts  
4 already noted this evening, we would like to  
5 echo the sentiment shared by the native  
6 community and offer additional perspectives to  
7 take into consideration.

8 In 2015 in collaboration with members of  
9 two state recognized Piscataway tribes the  
10 Accokeek Foundation's board chair, Dr. Virginia  
11 Busby co-published the indigenous study for the  
12 Nanjemoy and Mattawoman Creek watersheds. The  
13 purpose of this project was to identify and  
14 represent the indigenous culture landscape for  
15 the Nanjemoy and Mattawoman Creek watershed on  
16 the north shore of the Potomac River in Charles  
17 and Prince George's Counties.

18 The proposed solar project is situated  
19 within the study area. During the research,  
20 the cultural landscape study founded that  
21 additional research is still needed to be able

1 to more clearly establish connections between  
2 the historic and the contemporary Piscataway  
3 landscape there is virtually no archeological  
4 survey in the immediate and larger area. The  
5 level of historic property review is unknown  
6 and should be addressed for indigenous and  
7 other properties.

8 It's important to note that the indigenous  
9 cultural landscape includes ecological and  
10 cultural resources. Biodiversity is  
11 exceedingly significant and preserving  
12 contiguous large tracts within the ecological  
13 value that this property possesses is  
14 important.

15 Historic problems of social and economic  
16 justice should compel Georgetown University to  
17 ensure that they embrace ecological justice in  
18 this instance. While we applaud the  
19 university's interest in embracing renewable  
20 energy resources, their decision making and  
21 impact assessments must be informed by

1 effective community discussions with the goal  
2 of doing no harm to human and ecological  
3 communities, protecting cultural resources and  
4 respecting social justice.

5 The Accokeek Foundation respectfully  
6 requests that both Georgetown University and  
7 the appropriate agencies work with Piscataway  
8 community local stakeholders and conduct  
9 archaeological survey and research further the  
10 impact of this project on the irreplaceable  
11 environmental and cultural resources and  
12 indigenous resources of this region, thank you.

13 MS. SIGILLITO: It's almost 9:40 and we  
14 have this room until 10:00 o'clock. We will  
15 not be able to get through our whole list of  
16 speakers tonight, so there will be a  
17 continuation of the hearing, but we'll call on  
18 a few more and the next on the list is Erica  
19 Mulkay.

20 Good evening. My name's Erica Mulkay, I'm  
21 a relatively new resident to the area. I live

1 on Smith Point Road in Nanjemoy and I did move  
2 here because of the forest and the wildlife  
3 areas, so that was very important in choosing  
4 this to be where I live and I oppose the  
5 installation of the solar farm because it does  
6 clear-cut so much of our forest, it is so  
7 valuable. And everyone here tonight has pretty  
8 much really said it. I applaud Georgetown in  
9 their efforts to have solar and renewable  
10 energy, but I feel that they need to find a  
11 better site that is already cleared, install  
12 solar on their own facilities, upgrade  
13 facilities, that they have -- employ day  
14 lighting really achieve green energy instead of  
15 just saying we're going to clear-cut a forest  
16 to have solar. So please deny their permit so  
17 we can keep our forests, thank you.

18 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you.

19 Hello, I'm Gwynn Bagley from White Plains,  
20 Maryland. I grew up in Charles County. I  
21 often go out on the rail trail bike path. I

1 often go out kayaking in the Mattawoman Creek  
2 and in the Nanjemoy Creek and there's -- I  
3 always see many, many other people out there  
4 enjoying the environmental in Southern  
5 Maryland. I'm absolutely opposed to this  
6 project and I would ask that you deny the  
7 permit. I am concerned about the precedent  
8 this sets for future solar farms in Maryland,  
9 of which there will surely be many more. I  
10 think that appropriate sites such as rooftops,  
11 brown -- already degraded land canopies over  
12 parking lots should be found for these sites  
13 before forested land is disturbed and so I  
14 would ask that you deny the permit, thank you.

15 Thank you for giving me this opportunity  
16 to speak to you. And I'd like to acknowledge  
17 the Piscataway people, many of whom are my  
18 friends. They've been here for thousands of  
19 years and are still here. I actually applaud  
20 Georgetown in looking to go with green  
21 alternatives. I don't think this is the proper

1 one to do. There's plenty of -- actually  
2 there's like somebody else mentioned, there's  
3 plenty of areas on their campus that they don't  
4 have solar on. There are areas with solar. I  
5 would prefer to see them put more solar on  
6 their campus first before they go looking for  
7 taking away a forest. One of the concerns that  
8 many of the other people have mentioned, that's  
9 the increase in runoff and how that will affect  
10 the streams. The company said it will end at  
11 the property. No, it won't because the water  
12 will continue to flow downstream into other  
13 areas, into the Potomac and into the Chesapeake  
14 Bay areas that I use for recreational  
15 enjoyment. I'm not from the area, this area,  
16 I'm from Falls Church but then neither is  
17 Georgetown and neither is Origis.

18 And I think there's other maybe sources of  
19 green that they could also look at. Some of  
20 people mentioned using parking lots. Parking  
21 lots in Georgetown, they can put canopies on.

1 There's a large south facing roof on Georgetown  
2 that they could put solar on, other flat roofs  
3 that they could put solar on and have it in  
4 proper orientation to make a maximum use of it.  
5 So there's a lot they can do in their own  
6 backyard before they can come taking somebody  
7 else's backyard.

8 And there's also other ways, maybe one of  
9 the things to look at is wind power. It has a  
10 much smaller footprint than any solar. Those  
11 are things that should be looked at in  
12 addition. And basically you should look at  
13 areas that are already impervious because  
14 there's either a building or a parking lot on  
15 it. You can put like a canopy over a parking  
16 lot, brown fields that have been deforested,  
17 those type of areas to look at first before you  
18 look at something like this. I think it's the  
19 wrong project at the wrong time. Thank you  
20 very much.

21 MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Kathleen

1 Murphy.

2 Thank you my. Name is Kathleen Murphy  
3 and I'm testifying tonight in my individual  
4 capacity as a resident of Maryland. Since  
5 growing up in Maryland, I have been able to  
6 establish myself -- a career as a community  
7 advocate working with citizens in resource rich  
8 countries around the world. For over seven  
9 years I've had the honor of working on issues  
10 faced by indigenous and other front line  
11 communities that live in or near sites of oil  
12 and mineral extraction.

13 As someone who has witnessed the  
14 devastation of the fossil fuel industry  
15 firsthand, I've become an ardent supporter of  
16 renewable energy and the need for a transition  
17 away from fossil fuel reliance. While I  
18 wholeheartedly support renewable energy, I've  
19 become increasingly disappointed as I've  
20 researched this case to see some of the  
21 remnants of the same extractivist model used by

1 the fossil fuel industry for years creeping  
2 into renewable energy development.

3 I'm primarily concerned with two major  
4 aspect of this project which implicate  
5 Georgetown and Origis on one hand and the state  
6 of Maryland on the other. According to  
7 publicly available information, the Piscataway  
8 people that are indigenous to Southern Maryland  
9 and specifically Charles County have not been  
10 formally consulted at all thus far in the  
11 planned development of this project. I would  
12 like to point out that this is in contravention  
13 to the internationally recognized right of  
14 indigenous communities to free prior and  
15 informed consent for any large scale land based  
16 investment planned for their land.

17 Since this project is planned for  
18 Piscataway ancestral land and a Piscataway  
19 community has been officially recognized as an  
20 indigenous group by the state of Maryland since  
21 2012, I fail to understand why their rights to

1 free prior and informed consent have not been  
2 respected thus far in this project. I do not  
3 find the argument that the land is privately  
4 held as particularly relevant or compelling  
5 here.

6 On the second issue that is most  
7 concerning to me is in regards to the state of  
8 Maryland's failure to protect this area since  
9 it is a targeted ecological area. According to  
10 the definition by the Department of Natural  
11 Resources TEAs are lands and watersheds that  
12 have been identified as conservation priorities  
13 by DNR for national resource protection.  
14 Therefore, I fail to understand why this area  
15 designated as a TEA has not been, therefore,  
16 protected by the stateside program Open Space  
17 that provides funding for conservation of  
18 targeted land based on ecological priorities.

19 This forest is a critical part of  
20 Maryland's remaining green infrastructure. How  
21 can this piece of land be zoned for

1 agricultural use when it is a TEA.  
2 Furthermore, what is the purpose of the TEA  
3 program not to protect ecologically important  
4 areas and incentivize private landowners as is  
5 relevant in this case to sell privately owned  
6 land within a TEA to the state for  
7 conservation.

8 To be clear, in a hypothetical sense I am  
9 not here to resist this project today, only to  
10 find out that the land gets logged for timber  
11 at some future time. I am here to oppose this  
12 and any future project in this TEA and to plead  
13 that state government do its job here and stop  
14 undermining the intent of the TEA program in  
15 the first place.

16 To this end, I request that the state  
17 reconsider its approval of this project and  
18 instead prioritize this land for conservation  
19 using the tools at its disposal for exactly  
20 this purpose.

21 Furthermore, I wish that the state of

1 Maryland would absolutely require any developer  
2 seeking a project on Piscataway ancestral land  
3 to always in every case require developers to  
4 seek free prior informed consent from the  
5 Piscataway community. Thank you.

6 Hello Lyla West from Lusby, Maryland. I  
7 drove an hour to get here because this is so  
8 important. I oppose this siting of this solar  
9 farm. It's a terrible site for solar farm and  
10 our country used to be nature surrounding human  
11 development and now it's human development  
12 surrounding nature.

13 This is a very valuable forest for the  
14 wetlands and the wildlife and the drinking  
15 water supply. I've been sent here tonight by  
16 my adult children and adult grandchildren in  
17 college, they spend their recreational dollars  
18 on outdoor recreation, they come here to  
19 Southern Maryland to visit me, not because my  
20 cooking is good, but because of all the water  
21 sports, birding, hiking, outdoor recreation in

1 clean areas that they enjoy.

2 There are other sites to be found, many  
3 sites of land that is already on impervious  
4 surfaces, land that has already been degraded  
5 by industry. Maryland has to require companies  
6 to limit their solar farms to these areas that  
7 are already degraded. This forest is so  
8 precious the last remaining forest, the lungs  
9 of Southern Maryland and of Maryland, thank  
10 you.

11 Thank you. I'm Leonard Suza. I live in  
12 Solomons, Maryland. My wife and I became aware  
13 of the relationship between water quality and  
14 the marine environmental by running an oyster  
15 restoration program here in Southern Maryland  
16 for a number of years. We planted millions of  
17 oysters.

18 In the course of my exposure to  
19 environmental matters I came to learn that  
20 forests are far more effective in retaining  
21 rainwater runoff than lawns and certainly more

1 effective in retaining rainwater runoff than  
2 gravel surfaces or asphalt.

3 We saw the affects of clear cutting land  
4 on our oyster operation. In one creek where  
5 people were raising oysters at their dock, a  
6 developer had cleared an adjoining piece of  
7 land, a heavy rain occurred afterwards and what  
8 they had enjoyed previously as a dock became a  
9 deck because there was so much sediment that  
10 washed down the creek and into their property,  
11 surrounded it and literally they were  
12 surrounding by land and previously they had  
13 been surrounded by water. This was in St.  
14 Mary's County.

15 I think that you all in MDE and Secretary  
16 Grumbles have a very difficult situation that  
17 you're facing, in that you are being asked to  
18 address one project and there's powerful  
19 arguments for its going through by the  
20 landowner and the company and Georgetown. The  
21 problem is that there's a cumulative affect to

1 these projects and in this area where there's  
2 so much erodible soil, if you approve this one  
3 and then the next one has erodible soil and the  
4 one after that and the one after that, what you  
5 end up with is a cumulative impact on the  
6 environment that's difficult to reverse. Mark  
7 Gimlay talked earlier about a certain type of  
8 mussel. We were concerned and still are  
9 concerned about oysters. What we are asking  
10 you to do is to focus on looking for an  
11 alternative, deny this particular project and  
12 this location and find a place that will not be  
13 producing environmental damage that will  
14 reverse the extraordinary efforts that MDE and  
15 DNR are employing to try to protect the  
16 environmental in Maryland. Thank you.

17 MS. SIGILLITO: I don't believe that we  
18 have time for one more, so what I'm going to do  
19 now is read my closing remarks. And, like I  
20 said, there will be a continuation of this  
21 hearing and we will be begin that hearing

1 working from the list that we have here and  
2 starting with the next names of the people that  
3 indicated that they would like to make a  
4 statement.

5 The formal hearing record will remain open  
6 until April 17th, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. MDE is  
7 holding the record open until April 17, 2019  
8 because MDE understands that Georgetown  
9 University is undertaking an environmental  
10 assessment which will not be available for  
11 public review and comment until approximately  
12 March 20th, 2019. So the record will remain  
13 open until April 17, 2019, in order to provide  
14 an opportunity for the environmental assessment  
15 can be provided to MDE and for MDE to provide  
16 interested parties, including the applicant and  
17 project proponents, with an opportunity to  
18 review and provide MDE with additional  
19 comments.

20 The department will conduct a continuation  
21 of this hearing, either prior to the closure of

1 the hearing record on April 17, 2019 or the  
2 record closing date of April 17, 2019 will also  
3 allow the department to entertain requests for  
4 continuation of the hearing. We will continue  
5 this hearing.

6 Out front I have sheets that explain how  
7 you can submit written comments and I'm  
8 assuming that they're still out there. If not,  
9 I still have a few more up here, so please see  
10 me before you leave and I can give you those.  
11 You can submit additional comments in writing  
12 if you choose to. We appreciate your interest  
13 in this project and thank you for attending  
14 tonight. Goodnight.

15 (The Hearing concluded at 10:00 p.m.)  
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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, TEAGUE GIBSON, the officer before whom the hearing was taken, do hereby certify that the testimony appearing in the foregoing transcript was taken by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me; that said testimony is a true record of the proceedings; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any person employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

TEAGUE GIBSON, Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland.



My commission expires: October 6, 2019

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