



February 12, 2021

Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy  
Arlington County Department of Environmental Services  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 705  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Dooley,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the broad policy goals of the Community Energy Plan (CEP). The target of net-zero CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emission by 2050 is aspirational, and can be an impetus for innovation. But there is also the risk of losing the plan's sensitivity to individual circumstances if its implementation is too prescriptive. Arlington County should ensure sufficient flexibility in implementing the plan so that it is viable and economically feasible for businesses and residents, including the availability to consumers of a diverse range of energy choices in meeting growing energy needs.

The incorporation of CEP goals and policies into other Arlington County plans, policies, and processes (Strategy # 5) can help Arlington unify its policy frameworks and consider the consequences of its actions holistically. The implementation of this strategy offers promise for removing policy conflicts and promoting balance amongst policy goals. However, we caution Arlington County to take care that pursuit of CEP goals not impede or unduly raise the costs of achieving other key objectives, such as those in the Affordable Housing Master Plan.

The CEP can create an affirmative environment for the private sector to innovate. Incentives, such as the Green Building Incentive (Strategy # 10) and incentives for renovations (Strategy # 37), may encourage private sector participation. Similarly, empowering energy companies to innovate and establish a diversified energy ecosystem that leverages all tools may support their participation in the plan.

However, Arlington could lose community support if it takes a negative approach to implementing the CEP. Energy asset rankings for buildings (Strategy # 63) could become a "name and shame" tool if not developed sensitively, provoking opposition. The aforementioned Strategy # 37 could have a similarly negative impact for the upkeep of market-rate affordable housing if implemented as a mandate.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments and look forward to continued engagement on the topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates  
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County Board; Arlington County Manager