



August 14, 2019

Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chair Dorsey,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the broad policy goals of the Community Energy Plan update. Reducing Arlington's carbon emissions and increasing our energy efficiency can have positive economic effects, along with their intended environmental impact. However, the manner in which the plan is implemented will ultimately determine its success. While all four of the plan's focus areas are important, economic competitiveness is the lynchpin that makes this plan feasible.

The true impact of adopting the Community Energy Plan will come with its implementation. The change in the emissions target to net-zero CO₂ equivalent 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 the implementation framework 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. The broadening of the Green Building Incentive, also being proposed, from "net zero energy" to "zero carbon" certification is one such example of flexibility, and the Chamber supports making this change.

The Chamber commends the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE) staff for their outreach to the business community in preparing these updates to the Community Energy Plan and Green Building Incentive. AIRE staff presented recently at the Chamber's Sustainability Committee and Government Affairs & Economic Development Committee, facilitating and encouraging discussion and collaboration with the business community on each occasion. In supporting the adoption of the Community Energy Plan update, we encourage Arlington County to keep the risks highlighted in this letter in mind when drafting the implementation framework. We look forward to continuing our engagement to ensure a successful implementation of the updated plan.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Kate Bates
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County Board members Libby Garvey, Katie Cristol, Matt de Ferranti, and Erik Gutshall; County Manager Mark Schwartz; Greg Emanuel, Rich Dooley, Joan Kelsch, and Jessica Abrialind, Department of Environmental Services