

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice Chair

January 21, 2026

2:00 PM

House Office Building, Room 250

Maryland's Energy Landscape - Part 2

AGENDA

- I. Introductory Remarks
- II. Department of Human Services
 - Webster Ye, Chief of Staff
 - Augustin Ntabaganyimana, Executive Director of the Family Investment Administration
 - Rigel Moore, Director of the Office of Home Energy Programs
- III. Maryland Energy Administration
 - Kelly Speakes-Backman, Director
 - Ryan Opsal, Division Director for Energy Policy
 - Eric Coffman, Division Director for Energy Programs
- IV. Questions
- V. Concluding Remarks



Office of Home Energy Programs Briefing

House Environment and Transportation Committee

January 21, 2026

Agenda

1. Overview of OHEP Programs, Funding, and Administration
 2. OHEP Enrollment Numbers
 3. OHEP Eligibility and Categorical Eligibility
 4. Utility Affordability
 5. OHEP Initiatives
 6. Questions
- 

Office of Home Energy Programs

Program

Description

Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)

Core heating assistance for income-eligible households. In addition to natural gas, includes assistance for oil, propane, and other bulk fuels

Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA)

Arrearage forgiveness for natural gas customers

Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)

Electric bill payment assistance

Electric Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA)

Electric arrearage retirement and forgiveness



OHEP Funding Sources

Federal Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

- Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)
- Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA)

Federal Funding Sources

- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Grantor

- U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Appropriated Award Amount

- SFY25 LIHEAP Award Totaled in \$82,128,060

State Special Funds

- Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)
- Electric Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA)

State Special Funding Sources

- Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (MSEIF), Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)
- Rate payer contribution

Grantor

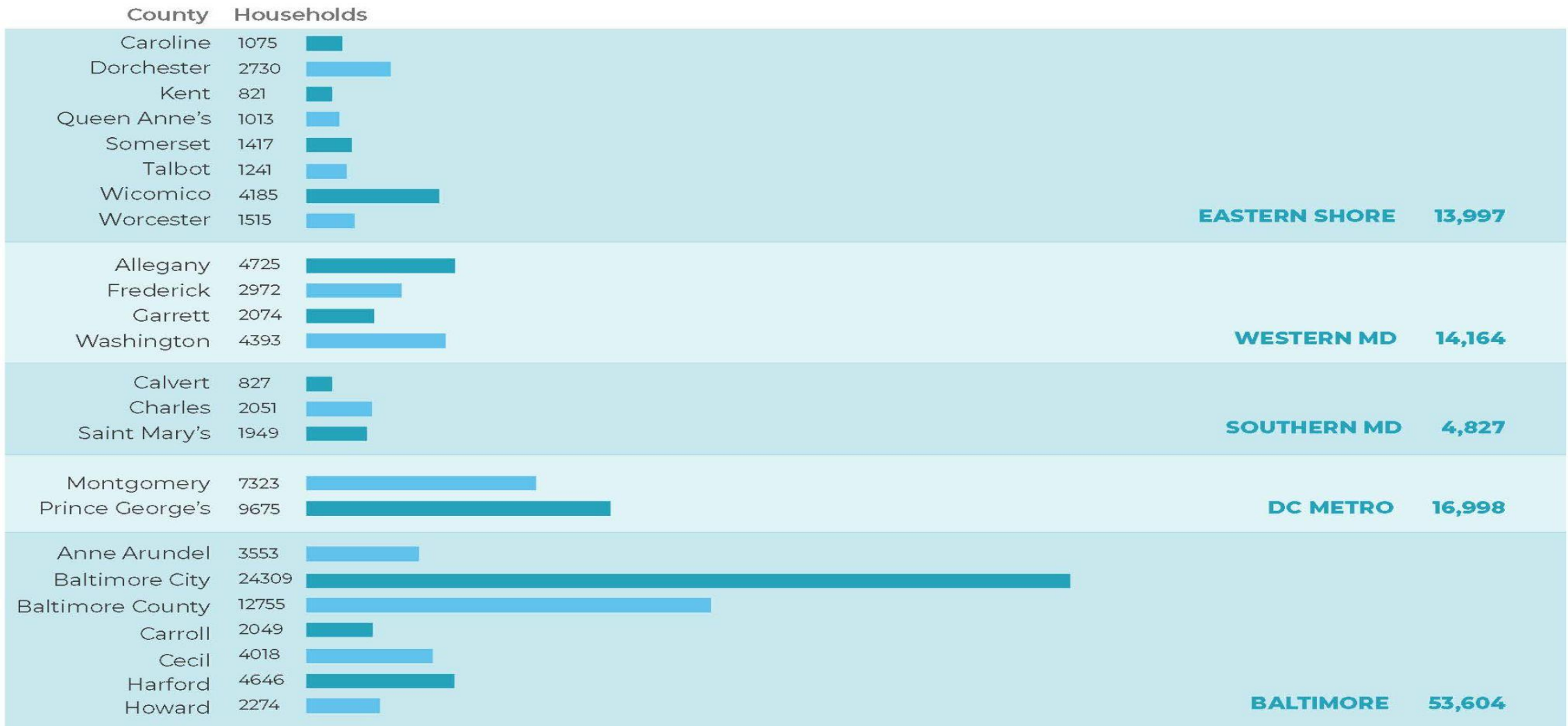
- Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)

Appropriated Award Amount

- SFY25 MSEIF Award Totaled in \$95,775,318

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED



Total Served: 103,590

Totals represent total households served, Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (10/1/2023 - 9/30/2024).

Federal Funding Implications

- Fall 2025 Federal Government Shutdown and Moore-Miller Administration Response to support OHEP households
- Current Continuing Resolution Expires January 30
 - LIHEAP under U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services funding package

Hybrid Administrative Model

- OHEP is administered in partnership with:
 - Community Action Agencies
 - Local Governments
 - Local Departments of Social Services, depending on jurisdiction



Local Administering Agencies

Allegany County Department of Social Services	Baltimore City Community Action Partnership
Baltimore County Department of Social Services	Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency
Carroll County	Calvert County- Southern MD Tri-County Community Action
Dorchester County Department of Social Services	Charles County- Southern MD Tri-County Community Action
Caroline County Department of Social Services	St. Mary's County- Southern MD Tri-County Community Action
Cecil County Department of Social Services	Somerset County-Shore Up!
Frederick Community Action Agency	Wicomico County-Shore Up!
Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.	Talbot County- Neighborhood Service Center, Inc.
Harford County Community Action Agency, Inc.	Queen Anne's County Department of Social Services
Howard County	Prince George's County Department of Social Services
Kent County Department of Social Services	Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
Washington County Community Action Council, Inc.	Worcester County-Shore Up!

Households Receiving OHEP Benefits

Program	SFY24 Total 7/1/2023-09/30/2024	SFY25 Total 7/1/2024-09/30/2025	Change	Percentage
MEAP	94,197	128,926	+ 35,729	36.9%
EUSP Bill Payment	112,132	130,046	+ 17,914	16.0%
EUSP Arrearage Retirement	29,605	35,470	+ 5,865	19.8%
Gas Arrearage Retirement	8,675	11,729	+ 3,054	35.2%
Crisis	N/A	1,258	+ 1,258	100%

- Receiving Benefits means those that have been approved and processed for a benefit.
- OHEP's 90-day curing period ends on September 30th of each year, allowing June applicants a three month period to satisfy their eligibility requirements post denial.
- It is important to note that SFY24 crisis season applications were not counted therefore not reflected within this reporting period.

OHEP Eligibility and Recent Categorical Eligibility Changes

- Targeted, needs-based benefit design
- Vulnerable population
 - Vulnerable Population Waiver
 - Critical Medical Needs Program
- Recent Categorical Eligibility Changes (CH207 of 2023)
 - SNAP, Temporary Cash Assistance, Social Security Income, and Means-Tested Veteran Assistance customers no longer need submit a separate OHEP application.
 - Demand spike (16 -37% increase in enrollment between FY24 and FY25, depending on the program)

FY 26 Income Guidelines

Household Size	Monthly Income Limits
1	\$2,608
2	\$3,525
3	\$4,441
4	\$5,358
5	\$6,275

Energy Efficiency Measures

- Weatherization Program (Partnership with DHCD)
- Solar Energy Initiatives



Current Initiatives

- Public Service Commission - PC59
- United Benefits Application (Maryland One App)
- Tech pilot to automate matching categorically eligible households with missing or incomplete utility account information



Questions

For more information, please contact:

Justin Hayes

Acting Director, Office of Government Affairs

Maryland Department of Human Services

justin.hayes1@maryland.gov



House Environment & Transportation Committee Briefing

**Kelly Speakes-Backman, Director
Maryland Energy Administration**



Maryland Energy Administration Mission

We promote **clean, affordable, reliable energy** and energy-related greenhouse gas emissions reductions to benefit Marylanders in a **just and equitable** manner.



Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF)

Fund comprised of revenue from multiple sources intended to decrease energy demand and increase energy supply

- Revenues from **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative** (RGGI) Auctions
- Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) **Alternative Compliance Payments** (ACP)
- Public Service Commission (PSC) orders

Each revenue source comes with specific usage directives



State of the Renewable Portfolio Standard (CY24)

RPS Results	Tier 1	Solar	Geothermal	LMI Geo.	Tier 2
RPS Obligation (MWh)	14,917,411	3,221,782	50,728	16,886	1,159,107
Retired RECs	3,324,606	2,568,159	22,874	276	1,073,328
% Shortfall	77.71%	20.29%	54.91%	98.37%	7.40%



Building an Affordable and Reliable Energy Future



- Governor Moore signs Executive Order
- Creates **Energy Subcabinet** that will coordinate interagency policy
- Creates **Energy Advisory Council** to provide external stakeholder input to the subcabinet
- Addresses affordability
- MEA will be working with DHS to examine the State's energy assistance programs

What's Driving Increased Utility Rates

- **PJM Challenges**

- Manage the regional markets that are meant to ensure that the lights stay on in reliable fashion
- There are serious concerns about the structure of these markets, as well as what PJM is doing **-or not doing-** to get new generation online to serve the increasing demand for electricity within the PJM footprint

- **Bill Makeup**

- Energy delivery costs have been **increasing disproportionately**
- This is largely driven by **questionable utility capital investments** as well as the cost of procuring energy through PJM



How is MEA Tackling Rising Utility Costs

- Taking active role in utility rate cases
- Operating energy grant programs that bring relief to Marylanders
 - Residential Energy Equity Grant Program
 - Maryland Solar Access Program
 - LMI Community Solar
- MEA will administer over **\$200 million in grants**, designed to save Marylanders money on their bills while moving toward cleaner energy.



How Do We Promote Clean Energy

MEA operates energy-related grant and rebate programs that promote the deployment of clean and renewable energy

This includes:

- Rooftop and community solar
- Energy efficiency efforts
- Microgrids and energy storage



Residential Energy Equity Program

- Over 5 years ~ \$70 M to improve energy efficiency of LMI homes & community serving buildings; > \$4.4 M in annual savings
- **Utility bill savings per household: \$200 - \$1,000+ annually**
- Over \$16 M for solar on LMI homes, nearly eliminating energy bills for 600 + Marylanders, while adding 4.2 MW of clean energy.



Low- to Moderate-Income Community Solar Program

Grants typically require at least 20% savings for subscribers

- 120+ grants; \$50 million in awards
- 183 MW of solar available to LMI Marylanders
- 80,000 metric tons of CO₂e / year in GHG reductions
- ~ \$183 million in total utility bill savings for up to 24,000 LMI subscribers, over 20 years.
- Partnering with DHS to help connect community solar to energy assistance.



Learn More About **MEA Programs**

MEA offers expertise and advice to match your needs to electrify with available programs and financial support.

