



February 27, 2007

To: Chairman and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Henry Bogdan, Public Policy Director

Re: House Bill – 978 – Maryland Energy Administration – Renewable Energy  
Small Business Grant Program

Position: **SUPPORT – With Amendment**

The Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations is a statewide organization comprised of over 1600 member nonprofit agencies, associations and institutions, and our purpose is to support and enhance the effectiveness of the State's more than 24,000 nonprofit groups in carrying out their missions of public and community service.

House Bill 978 would create a new grant program to encourage relatively new small businesses (formed in the last five years) to make use of renewable energy resources. In view of the need to reduce energy consumption from fossil fuel sources in order to avert serious human and economic dislocation from the consequences of global warming, this is clearly an appropriate state policy initiative, complementing other efforts.

We do urge you to recognize that over the last 15 years the nonprofit sector in Maryland has been a steadily growing portion of the economy and employment base – continuing to add numbers throughout that period even when recession slowed or stopped growth in other economic sectors. It clearly serves the state's policy objective for this program to include tax exempt nonprofit corporations as eligible for the subsidy and incentive under HB 978, provided they meet the other criteria established in the legislation. We understand that this change is acceptable to the lead sponsors.

We urge you to **adopt the attached amendment** to accomplish this, and to give House Bill 978 **a favorable report as amended.**