

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 250, *an enhancement of the renewable Energy Portfolio Act*

Given (virtually) at the Stakeholder Meeting, June 20 2020

The Rev. Canon Martha Kirkpatrick, the Episcopal Church in Delaware

Good morning, Senator McDowell. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of SB 250. I am the Rev. Canon Martha Kirkpatrick, an Episcopal priest in Delaware and a member of the board of Delaware Interfaith Power & Light. I bring you greetings from Bishop Kevin Brown, who is a signatory on the letter from clergy from many faith traditions across Delaware in support of this bill.

For us, climate change is a profoundly moral issue. The science is compelling; we know climate change is real. We know the burning of fossil fuels is the major cause. The suffering caused by climate change threatens every aspect of our lives. We see the impacts in our air quality, sea level rise, ecological impacts. Health, community, the economy, all are impacted. Our most vulnerable populations suffer most acutely.

In the words of Pope Francis: This crisis of climate change is both environmental and social. Which is exactly what excites me so much about this bill. I'm a former environmental regulator; I've seen a number of solar bills. But this bill is particularly innovative and pioneering in that it not only would increase the percentage of our energy from renewable sources, it also supports the vitality and sustainability of local communities — the importance of which has become so apparent in this pandemic — and would bring lower cost energy to low-income Delawareans — lower cost, renewable energy to the very people who need it most. This is a fantastic opportunity to love the earth and love our neighbor as ourselves. The Episcopal Church is eager to partner with our neighbors and communities to make real progress in the advancement of renewable energy.

It is our sacred charge to care for creation, and to care for each other. We all want to leave a better world to our children and grandchildren. But we don't have all the time in the world to address this crisis. We need to take bold action now for our planet and our communities, which this Bill does. Parishes in the Episcopal Church and a wide diversity of faith communities, supported by Delaware Interfaith Power & Light, **will** work together to expand the reach and support the success of this bill. Because the health and welfare of our children depend upon it. Thank you.