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The Current - January 2011

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Make your voice and tax dollars work as hard as you do at Thursday's Clean Energy Legislative Reception.

See contact information for key legislators.

Lawmakers are prioritizing the legislative they will push for. Will it include your “ask?”

You can work to make sure it does by participating the Maryland Clean Energy Center’s Legislative Reception, Thursday, January 27. To register, please go to <http://mdcleanenergy.org/reception>



The Clean Energy Legislative Reception

The Reception begins with breakfast at 8 a.m. in Governor Calvert House on State Circle. Champions of Maryland’s clean energy sector will address the gathering about key issues.

Thursday, January 27 runs from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the Governor Calvert House just steps from the offices of Maryland lawmakers.

Legislators who have confirmed their intention to speak include:

- U.S. Sen. Benjamin Cardin
- Senate President Mike Miller
- Senate Finance Committee Chair Thomas “Mac” Middleton
- Senate Majority Leader and Senate Finance Committee member Rob Garagiola
- Sen. Paul Pinsky, Environmental Matters Committee
- House Economic Matters Committee member Del. Brian Feldman
- Del. Dana Stein, Environmental Matters Committee
- Del. Jon Cardin, Ways & Means Committee
- Del. Heather Mizeur, Appropriations Committee

Special featured speakers include:

- Jim Harkins, Director, Maryland Environmental Service
- Susan Gray, Senior Staff, Power Plant Research Program
- Malcolm Woolf, Director, Maryland Energy Administration
- Barbara Hoffman, Artemis Group

The six sponsors you can learn more about at the Reception are:

- [Pfister Energy's Renewable Energy Systems](#);
- [SavWatt's LED Lighting Solutions](#);
- [Energy Answers-Baltimore's Fairfield Resource Recovery Project](#);
- [NRG Bluewater Wind](#)
- [Nautilus Solar](#)
- [Clean Currents](#)

After the reception, visit your elected officials and members of two all-important committees: the Senate Finance Committee and the House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee.

Below are the 2011 members of each committee, with their telephone numbers and links to the other contact information. If your lawmaker is not listed here, find their contact information here: <http://MDElect.net/ElectedOfficials>.

Senate Finance Committee – 11 members

Thomas M. Middleton , Chair	Charles, (410) 841-3616, (301) 858-3616
John C. Astle , Vice-Chair	Anne Arundel, (410) 841-3578, (301) 858-3578
Robert J. Garagiola	Montgomery, (410) 841-3169, (301) 858-3169
Barry Glassman	Harford, (410) 841-3603, (301) 858-3603
Delores G. Kelley	Baltimore, (410) 841-3606, (301) 858-3606
Allan H. Kittleman	Carroll & Harford, (410) 841-3671, (301) 858-3671
Katherine A. Klausmeier	Baltimore, (410) 841-3620, (301) 858-3620
James N. Matthias, Jr.	Somerset, Wicomico & Worcester, (410) 841-3645, (301) 858-3645
C. Anthony Muse	Prince George's, (410) 841-3092, (301) 858-3092
E. J. Pipkin	Caroline, Cecil, Kent & Queen Anne's, (410) 841-3639, (301) 858-3639
Catherine E. Pugh	Baltimore City, (410) 841-3656, (301) 858-3656

House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee – 23 members

[Dereck E. Davis](#), Chair
[David D. Rudolph](#), Vice-Chair
[Charles E. Barkley](#)
[Benjamin S. Barnes](#)
858-3046
[Aisha N. Braveboy](#)
[Emmett C. Burns, Jr.](#)
[Brian J. Feldman](#)
[Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio](#)
858-3429
[Hattie N. Harrison](#)
[Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.](#)
(301) 858-3543
[Tom Hucker](#)
[Richard K. Impallaria](#)
[Sally Y. Jameson](#)
[Benjamin F. Kramer](#)
[Mary Ann Love](#)
[Brian K. McHale](#)
[Warren E. Miller](#)
[Joseph J. Minnick](#)
[John A. Olszewski, Jr.](#)
[Steven R. Schuh](#)
[Kelly M. Schulz](#)
[Donna Stifler](#)
[Michael L. Vaughn](#)

Prince George's, (410) 841-3519, (301) 858-3519
Cecil, (410) 841-3444, (301) 858-3444
Montgomery, (410) 841-3001, (301) 858-3001
Anne Arundel & Prince George's, (410) 841-3046, (301)
858-3046
Prince George's, (410) 841-3707, (301) 858-3707
Baltimore, (410) 841-3352, (301) 858-3352
Montgomery, (410) 841-3186, (301) 858-3186
Dorchester, Talbot & Wicomico, (410) 841-3429, (301)
858-3429
Baltimore City, (410) 841-3486, (301) 858-3486
Caroline, Cecil, Kent & Queen Anne's, (410) 841-3543,
(301) 858-3543
Montgomery, (410) 841-3474, (301) 858-3474
Baltimore & Harford, (410) 841-3334, (301) 858-3334
Charles, (410) 841-3337, (301) 858-3337
Anne Arundel, (410) 841-3485, (301) 858-3485
Baltimore City, (410) 841-3511, (301) 858-3511
Carroll & Howard, (410) 841-3319, (301) 858-3319
Howard, (410) 841-3582, (301) 858-3582
Baltimore, (410) 841-3332, (301) 858-3332
Baltimore, (410) 841-3458, (301) 858-3458
Anne Arundel, (410) 841-3206, (301) 858-3206
Frederick, (410) 841-3080, (301) 858-3080
Harford, (410) 841-3278, (301) 858-3278
Prince George's, (410) 841-3691, (301) 858-3691

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Legislation would aid wind energy development offshore Ocean City

Prince George's County Senator Paul Pinsky and Montgomery County Delegate Tom Hucker are hoping to pass legislation by this spring that would lay critical groundwork for the development of wind power farms off Maryland's coast.

The two Democrats plan to present legislation to the 2011 session of Maryland's General Assembly which would require Maryland utilities to acquire some of their electricity through long-term, power-purchase agreements (PPAs) with clean energy producers, including offshore wind farms.

Both Massachusetts and Delaware have similar mandates in place.



Sen. Paul Pinsky of Prince George's County



Del. Tom Hucker of Montgomery County

Proponents of wind power in Maryland argue those long-term purchase agreements are essential to help developers attract the necessary investors to construct offshore installations. They add that 20-year power purchase agreements would give utilities and consumers much-needed long-term stability in energy prices.

Similar legislation presented by Pinsky and Hucker failed in the 2010 session after utilities raised objections, some legislators questioned the impact on consumers.

"There might be an issue that has to be resolved on how you ensure the price that ratepayers

pay is as low as possible, but also high enough to attract wind development,” said Ian Ullman, Legislative Director for Senator Pinsky. However, Maryland utilities and the PSC, which would have to approve all long-term purchase agreements, are well equipped to establish the proper price point, he said.

Ullman said he is optimistic that growing interest and understanding of clean energy issues and wind-power campaigns by environmental groups will help the Pinsky-Hucker bill pass this session.

A widespread, grassroots lobbying effort could help the bill secure key swing votes, he added.

[Watch Sen. Pinsky in this brief video](#) explain why PPAs are integral to wind energy development in Maryland. [Go here for the importance of Maryland’s push for PPAs.](#)

“It makes a big difference for legislators who haven’t thought a lot about the issue,” Ullman said. Such legislators tend to follow the recommendations of experts, such as the utilities. “But if you have a lot of people who have been e-mailing and writing letters and calling, saying this is an important issue, then that can change their thinking.”

[Google](#) and [Trans-Elect Development Company](#), based in Bethesda, have outlined plans to build a massive transmission line along the Mid-Atlantic coast to bring onshore the power generated by wind turbines proposed for offshore Ocean City and other coastal locations. [Read more about that in the December issue of *The Current*.](#)

If you have 14 minutes, [watch Trans-Elect CEO Robert Mitchell](#) explain how offshore wind makes sense in his remarks at an offshore wind rally last month in Annapolis.

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50% energy savings possible with new home energy rebates from

Maryland Energy Administration

A new rebate program from the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) unveiled January 20 enables Marylanders to save up to 50% on home energy efficiency upgrades.

The [Home Performance Rebate program](#) is designed to bring Maryland closer to achieving its goal of reducing energy consumption by 15% by 2015. It offers a 35% rebate (up to \$3,100 total) toward qualifying home efficiency upgrades. When combined with the existing utility-sponsored rebates of 15% off the cost of qualifying home efficiency upgrades, Marylanders are now able to reduce the cost of upgrading their home by as much as half.



The Home Performance Rebate program can be used to hire a home performance contractor to complete a number of qualifying home energy efficiency upgrades such as:

- whole-house air sealing
- attic insulation
- duct sealing or replacement
- wall insulation, and
- crawl space or basement insulation

Each of these upgrades will help keep homes more comfortable in extreme weather, and save homeowners money by lowering their energy bills throughout the life of the investment.

For individuals who, in addition to the up to 50% rebate, need assistance in financing a home energy efficiency investment, the Maryland Clean Energy Center is offering unsecured home energy improvement loans for up to \$20,000 at 6.99%. For more information, go [here](#); to apply for a home energy improvement loan, go [here](#).

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Solar leasing coming to Maryland

Marylanders are going to be reading and hearing soon about a new way to go solar: leasing solar photovoltaic (PV) panels from a third-party.

SolarCity, which has worked this business model successfully in California and Oregon, is slated to introduce solar leases to Marylanders in February and has acquired Clean Currents Solar, a division of Rockville, MD-based Clean Currents.

Leasing solar panels means hiring a company such as Clean Currents Solar / SolarCity to design and install a solar PV system it owns and is installed at the solar company's cost. The homeowner or small business – the customer -- makes a monthly payment for the electricity generated by the solar panels which covers a portion of the customer's electricity consumption. The customer pays the utility for the balance. The combined total is designed to be less than purchasing all of the customer's electricity from the utility.

Avoiding the up-front capital investment of a solar system is the prime driver for property owners who buy into this approach. This way, the net savings can begin immediately vs. having to recoup the purchase cost which typically ranges between \$30,000 and \$50,000 for single family residences. That said, once that investment is recovered, that portion of their electricity essentially is free. Solar Renewable Energy Credits, or SRECs, belong to the system owner – SolarCity in this instance – not the customer.



Both companies are private. Neither company disclosed terms of the acquisition. SolarCity's Maryland / DC operations will be their first on the East Coast and will be run under the leadership of Clean Currents co-founder Leon Keshishian. Currently, [Clean Currents](#) is housed in the Rockville Innovation Center, which is part of Montgomery County's Montgomery County

Business Incubator Network. Gary Skulnik, another Clean Currents co-founder, told the [Washington Business Journal](#) the company plans on graduating out of the Center by year-end 2011.

[SolarCity](#), headquartered in San Mateo, CA, is backed by a \$700 million-plus fund in maintains from financing partners U.S. Bank, PG&E Corp. and National Bank of Arizona.

For additional coverage, click on the appropriate link for the [Washington Post](#) and [WAMU radio](#).

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Perdue, Washington Gas Energy Services and Standard Solar Partner to Develop Solar Power Projects

More than 11,000 solar panels will be installed at Perdue facilities in Salisbury, Md. and Bridgeville, Del. this summer, resulting in one of the largest commercially-owned solar power systems in the eastern United States.

Perdue has entered into a 15-year agreement with Washington Gas Energy Services, Inc. (WGES) to purchase electricity generated by the solar panels at guaranteed prices.



By September 2011, Standard Solar Inc. of Rockville, Md. will install 2.7 megawatts (MWs) of ground-mounted solar panels, covering the equivalent of approximately 10 football fields, on Perdue property. Almost half will be at the Perdue corporate offices in Salisbury and will be visible to passers-by on westbound U.S. Route 50. The others will be at the company's feed mill in Bridgeville, Del.

The systems, which will be owned and operated by WGES, will generate an average of 3,700 megawatt hours of electricity each year, or the amount of power used by 340 typical U.S. homes. At peak production, the panels will produce as much as 90 percent of the electrical demand for each facility.

“Stewardship is one of our company’s core values, so this is a perfect fit for the way we do business,” said Steve Schwalb, Perdue’s Vice President of Environmental Sustainability. “Using solar power means we’ll have a clean energy source that doesn’t pollute or create greenhouse gases, while lowering Perdue’s energy costs over the life of the project.”

Schwalb estimated the clean electricity from the solar panels will reduce Perdue’s carbon footprint by 3,000 tons per year, the equivalent of eliminating greenhouse gas emissions from 300,000 gallons of gasoline per year, or nearly 4.5 million gallons through the life of the contract.

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LED factory could bring 500 clean energy jobs to Baltimore

SavWatt, a 15-person company specializing in light emitting diodes (LED), is aiming to buck an international trend and establish a manufacturing hub that could create up to 500 clean energy jobs in downtown Baltimore.

SavWatt executives who currently operate out of modest quarters on Eastern Avenue outside of downtown Baltimore, are preparing to move into 14,000 square feet of space near M&T Bank Stadium by March 1. The move and expansion would enable SavWatt to shift the manufacturing operations for its LED lamps, which are currently produced in China, to Baltimore and greatly increase its local workforce.



Chief Executive Officer Michael Haug said he expects to hire an additional 30 employees by the end of March, grow the workforce to about 170 by year's end and potentially expand to 500 employees by year-end 2013.

Haug says he has tailored his growth plan to meet specific needs in the burgeoning LED industry.

Presently, about 80 percent of all LED products are manufactured in China. Many are distributed by companies who bring in large shipments on demand and don't maintain a local inventory of product. Consequently, many would-be customers cannot purchase a small number of LEDs to determine the most appropriate product for their facility. That ensures that some customers never consider LEDs as an option.

SavWatt's Baltimore factory would provide both a ready, locally produced supply of LEDs as well as education about LEDs and high-efficiency lighting, Haug said.

SavWatt, which secured Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) and Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) certifications for its products last year and got one product listing on the U.S. Department of Energy site, asserts its LED lamps for highways, bridges, street lights, shopping centers, hospitals and elsewhere can deliver major financial, environmental and performance benefits for a wide range of clients.

SavWatt estimates that an organization operating 100 conventional, 400-watt, high-pressure sodium bulbs spends about \$78,000 a year on maintenance, ballast and replacements. Operating 100 SavWatt LED replacement fixtures would cost about \$6,900 annually, the company projects.

SavWatt recently assessed lighting expenses of Fairfax County, Va. The company concluded that Fairfax was spending more than \$8 million a year maintaining 56,500 conventional lights.

Switching to LED fixtures, SavWatt concluded, would cut that annual expense 60 percent down to \$4.7 million and lower the county's annual carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 24,000 metric tons. That's the equivalent of taking about 5,000 cars off the roads.

SavWatt's technology advances deliver added financial and performance benefits to clients, Haug said. SavWatt's LED streetlights feature a proprietary epitaxial technology, a system of depositing a thin layer of material over a single crystal substrate. That technology, Haug said, creates the highest quality, longest lasting LED arrays on the market. In addition, SavWatt's driver technology in its LED lamps extends the life of a LED light by six to eight years.

SavWatt executives also plan to manufacture their signature Eco-Pole at the downtown Baltimore plant. Designed to light sidewalks and other small areas, the pole combines a solar panel, a small wind turbine and backup batteries to power an LED streetlamp.

Haug acknowledges that SavWatt will need to build wider product awareness and market share to sustain its expansion. Consequently, the company has secured a \$1-million Maryland Energy Sector Grant and partnered with Clean Edison to hold LEED training courses for architects, contractors, construction tradesmen and others at SavWatt's downtown Baltimore facility. As part of the courses, SavWatt and Clean Edison will discuss various lighting technologies, including LEDs, and give students a tour of the SavWatt factory.

"We're going to bring the people to the church," Haug said.

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Rural Maryland companies embracing clean energy

Thirteen rural and agricultural businesses in Maryland are adopting clean energy and energy efficiency technologies with the assistance of grants from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America Program \(REAP\)](#).

The grant projects together receiving almost \$750,000 of federal assistance and included several solar installations, wind turbines, high-efficiency grain dryers and one large geothermal system.

With the help of Rebecca Rush of the Renewable Energy Partnership in Hagerstown, Md., operators of Sunnyside Farms, Inc. in Westminster applied for and used their \$220,000 grant to cover about 25 percent of the cost of a 200-kilowatt photo-voltaic array.

The array was installed by Earth and Air Technologies of Hampstead, Md.. It includes 935 panels, covers about one acre of the farm and ranks as the largest ground-mounted solar system placed at a Maryland farm to date.

Brad Rill, Vice President of Sunnyside, said the egg-producer had previously used a \$50,000 grant from the Maryland Energy Administration plus federal tax grants to complete an energy audit and install conservation measures, including energy efficient lighting. Rising electricity costs and tight margins in agriculture, however, prompted Sunnyside managers to investigate renewable energy options.

They concluded the solar system, which went into operation last fall, would meet 25-30 percent of Sunnyside's annual electricity needs and pay for itself in five years. So far, the system is slightly exceeding expectations, Rill said.

“Sunnyside Farms’ solar energy project is a model for how agricultural businesses can utilize renewable energy to save money and help our nation become less dependent on foreign oil,” said Senator Ben Cardin. “Our nation’s economic future depends on becoming as energy efficient as possible and agriculture and farming have an important role in showing the business community how alternative, renewable energy can work and make a difference.”



Brad Rill, Vice President of Sunnyside Farms is pictured with his wife Tracey and children Tyler, Logan, Molly and Keegan in front of the solar panel array that supports the family's chicken-egg production facility in Westminster, Maryland. Sunnyside Farms gathers about 29,000 dozen eggs per day.

At Sussman Farms in Westminster, owner John Sussman used his \$20,000 grant to offset the cost of an energy efficient grain dryer. Sussman who farms wheat, barley, corn, soybeans and hay on 1,450 acres in Carroll County, said it is too early to determine the precise energy savings he will achieve with the new equipment. The preliminary indications, however, are promising.

With 100 gallons of propane, his previous equipment could dry 50 bushels of grain. Using the same amount of fuel, the new machine dries 85-90 bushels. Grain dryers, he added, also use electricity to run their motors. The new dryer completes jobs quicker, reducing Sussman's electricity expenses. In total, Sussman estimates that it cost 10-11 cents to dry each bushel of corn with the new machine – down from 18-20 cents per bushel with the old equipment. Those savings, he said, are vital in an era when farmers operate within extremely tight financial margins.

“This project is promoting the Obama administration's efforts to transition to a renewable

energy economy,” said Jack Tarburton, USDA’s Maryland Rural Development State Director. “It is good for business, good for the economy, creates jobs and it promises a reduction in energy consumption. Most importantly, it is helping to keep farmers on the farm, and offers opportunities for the next generation of farmers.”

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Biofuels forum Feb. 16 to explore business opportunities, environmental benefits

Can Maryland develop a vigorous biomass/biofuels sector that protects the health of the Chesapeake Bay? What challenges must Maryland companies, researchers and governments overcome to become competitive in biomass/biofuels on the world stage? And how can Maryland leaders in biomass/biofuels use their expertise to open up business opportunities and deliver clean energy solutions in Asia?



Those are some of the questions that an expert panel will tackle at the next Maryland-Asia Environmental Partnership Energy and Environmental Leadership Series. Co-sponsored by the Maryland Clean Energy Center, the [half-day forum on Wednesday, February 16](#) will focus on “Keys to Success in the U.S. Biomass and Biofuels Industries While Protecting the Chesapeake Watershed.”

Featured speakers – who will discuss the state of the biomass/biofuels industry, competitive technologies and global market opportunities – will include:

- Jean-Paul Crouzoulon, Senior Vice President of AREVA North America’s Renewable

Energies division;

- Chris Rice, Biomass Director with the Maryland Energy Administration;
- Connie Lauston, Vice President of New Generation Biofuels;
- Mark Luciw, Business Development Director of Hytek-Bio, LLC;
- George Oyler, Founder of Clean Green Chesapeake, LLC;
- Steve Hutchison, Founder of Zymetis;
- Dan Rider, Program Manager of the Department of Natural Resources' Maryland Forest Service;
- Ken Staver, Research Scientist at the University of Maryland, College of Agriculture's Wye Research and Education Center.

The Forum will be held in the main seminar room at UMBC's incubator facility at 1450 South Rolling Road, Baltimore, Md. 21227.

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New Generation Biofuels converts Baltimore city buildings to clean energy

New Generation Biofuels has landed a one-year, \$1.3-million contract to heat three Baltimore City buildings. Successful completion of the biofuels trial – in two phases – could propel the fledgling Columbia-based company into a much larger venture: a city-wide plan to heat public buildings with clean energy.

During the first phase, [New Generation Biofuels](#) heated the Pimlico Fire and Police Training Facility and Eastern Health Center for six months. During the second phase, New Generation Biofuels will continue to heat the two facilities as well as the Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant to determine the biofuel's performance over the course of a full year.



“We have to make sure we can demonstrate to the marketplace that although we can do these test burns that our fuel operates efficiently over a longer period of time. That’s one of the reasons this long-term test burn with the city is so critical to us,” said Bryan McPhee, a spokesman for New Generation Biofuels. “That becomes our calling card. That is going to give us the information that we need to provide to others in the industry. We’re a fairly new technology but we will be able to show the results we are able to achieve in the long term. As we develop that deck of information, then we will grow our customer base.”

New Generation Biofuels’ product, which is made from new and recycled plant oils and animal fats, is revenue-neutral for consumers, McPhee said. The company, he explained, sets its price to be competitive with ultra-low sulfur diesel, a product that Baltimore City had already begun using in some facilities.

Less than five years old, New Generation Biofuels currently employs 12 people and can produce up to 5 million gallons of biofuel annually at its plant in South Baltimore. The company has also partnered with the Baltimore City Public School System to run biofuel trials at two schools: Franklin Square Elementary and Woodhome Elementary.

City officials, McPhee said, may consider converting public buildings throughout the jurisdiction to biofuels if the upcoming, year-long trial at Pimlico, Back River and Eastern Health succeeds.

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[Clean Energy Tech Incubator conference Feb. 15 to probe cyber security for Smart Grid initiatives](#)

cyber security standards for the Smart Grid at a free, full-day conference at the University of Maryland Baltimore County February 15.

Sponsored by the Maryland Clean Energy Center and its Clean Energy Technology Incubator (CETI) at bwtech@UMBC and hosted by UMD's Computer Science and Electrical Engineering Department, the conference will bring together experts from government, industry and academia from across the Mid-Atlantic region to examine issues of critical importance to securing the emerging Smart Grid.



The forum runs from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Agenda items will include:

- An overview of NIST activities, including the Smart Grid Interoperability Panel and Governing Board;
- overview of U.S. Department of Energy Smart Grid activities;
- security architecture;
- privacy;
- cryptography and key management;
- bottom-up security analysis; and
- roadmap for NIST's Cyber Security Working Group.

Attendance is free and expected to exceed 100. To learn more about the "Guidelines for Smart Grid Cyber Security" conference and RSVP for the event, go to www.bwtechumbc.com/ceti or contact Bjorn Frogner, Entrepreneur in Residence at CETI, at bjorn.frogner@umbc.edu.

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Hybrids and EVs are center stage at the 2011 Washington Auto Show January 28 – February 6 at the DC Convention Center

See hybrid and electric vehicle (EV) offerings, as well as, EV charging technologies at this year's regional auto show from Friday, January 28 through Sunday, February 6.

One exhibitor, [NRG Electric Vehicle Services](#), will explain how it's building the nation's first privately funded, comprehensive electric vehicle ecosystem in Houston to encourage EV adoption and give drivers new freedom and range confidence. That concept might work in the Baltimore / Washington metroplex.



A very small vehicle slate for the Auto Show – the “[smart fortwo](#)” car (photo) by the Penske Automotive Group – is the type of car showing up on more urban and suburban streets. Nissan is expected to showcase its [Leaf all-electric vehicle](#) and General Motors / Chevrolet will be displaying its [all-electric Volt](#).

More information about the auto show is [here](#). Buy tickets online in advance [here](#).

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