



House Bill 1250

Maryland Solar Investment Tax Credit and Task Force to Study Solar Energy Incentives

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Ways and Means and Economic Matters
Committees

Date: March 9, 2022

From: Kevin Kinnally and Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1250 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill would authorize state income tax credits for the installation of specified solar energy property and establish a task force to study solar incentives. MACo seeks amendments to broaden the representation on the task force to ensure a comprehensive and diverse consideration of regional needs.

Solar represents one of the most promising sources of clean and renewable energy. During this legislative session alone, several major environmental and climate-response bills have come forward where expanded solar is envisioned as a component in helping to reduce emissions, meet clean energy goals, and create jobs. Counties recognize the importance of solar and believe in its wide deployment as part of a forward-looking land use and energy strategy. However, questions remain about the implications of widespread adoption and which policy tools will best promote its continued implementation.

As such, it is critical to have the fullest understanding of the implications of a broad rollout of solar. Counties, therefore, ask that the following points guide amendments to the task force envisioned under the bill:

- Counties should have representation to fully cover the diversity of Maryland's various environments and landscapes. Therefore, MACo proposes that the Commission allocates two seats (one elected official and one county professional practitioner in land use or environmental policy) from each of four regions to reflect the breadth of implementation diversity. Ensuring the commission is sensitive to the range of issues from the western piedmont, to the developed urbanized areas, to the prime agricultural tiers will benefit its deliberations and credibility.
- The Commission should be expanded to study all aspects of a broad solar rollout. Instead of committing to piecemeal solar policy development, counties believe it would be more efficient to establish one central body to look into the issue and develop recommendations regarding not only tax benefits, but also capacity, land renewal incentives, clean energy sourced on landfill properties, and the like.

HB 1250 is a suitable next step in developing Maryland's long-term solar strategy. The proposed task force should be broadened both in diversity and scope to best develop the most coordinated and comprehensive vision for the future. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for HB 1250.