

# **HB0300 Solar Panels on Schools FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



## TESTIMONY FOR HB0300

### School Buildings - Solar Technology - Solar Panels on Schools

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Bhandari

**Committee:** Appropriations

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0300 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

With the passing of the School Construction legislation two years ago, projects for construction of new schools and upgrades for existing schools are suddenly flush with funding. Constructing a new school, or replacing the roof on an existing school without installing solar panels is absolutely foolish considering the incentives available, the projected increase in the cost of fossil fuels and the imperative to reduce greenhouse gasses. Additionally, it sends the wrong message to the youth of this state – that we can't act in our own best interest.

As far as incentives for installing solar panels, the Climate Solutions Now Act passed last session provides additional funds to build net zero schools which would require rooftop solar. The Inflation Reduction Act also allows tax-exempt organizations, like schools, to take advantage of solar tax credits and grants are coming soon for EPA's clean schools program. And then there is innovative financing like participation in demand response programs, alternative school financing, power purchase agreements, and community solar, all of which schools can examine.

The financial benefits of solar on school budgets due to the projected increase in fossil fuel costs over the long term are reason enough to invest in this technology. Additionally, solar can be used as a teaching opportunity for Career Technology Education students and students learning the sciences, which will help provide a workforce for the building decarbonization that we already are required to undertake.

Our members believe strongly that the state should encourage and enhance solar energy production and we believe that installing solar in schools is one way to do that. We also would like to encourage consideration of energy storage, which will make schools more resilient during power outages and help offset grid management issues with solar coming online. Finally, we encourage IAC to be required to set up a clearing house so that information on solar grants, tax credits, alternative financing, etc. can easily be available.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

# **TESTIMONY FOR HB0300.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jared Schablein

Position: FAV

## TESTIMONY FOR HB0300

### School Buildings - Solar Technology - Solar Panels on Schools

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Bhandari  
Committee: Appropriations  
Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus  
Person Submitting: Jared Schablein, Chair  
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0300 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

Projects for the construction of new schools and renovations for existing schools are suddenly saturated with funds due to the passage of the School Construction Law two years ago. It would be absolutely foolish to construct a new school or replace the roof of an existing one without solar panels being installed in considering the financial incentives available, the expected increase in the cost of fossil fuels, and the necessity to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, it conveys the incorrect message to the state's youth that we are incapable of acting in our own best interests.

As far as incentives for installing solar panels, the Climate Solutions Now Act passed last session provides additional funds to build net zero schools which would require rooftop solar. The Inflation Reduction Act also authorizes solar tax credits available to tax-exempt groups like schools, and funds for the EPA's clean schools program will be available soon. Then there is alternate school finance, power purchase agreements, community solar, and involvement in demand response programs, all of which schools can research.

The economic benefits of solar on school budgets due to the anticipated long-term rise in the cost of fossil fuels are adequate reasons for investing in this technology. In addition, teaching science and career technology education students about solar energy will help prepare a workforce for the decarbonization of structures that we have already mandated to implement.

Installing solar in schools, in the viewpoint of our members, is one strategy to incentivize and increase the production of solar energy by the state. We also wish to encourage the use of energy storage, which will improve schools' resistance to power outages and assist mitigate grid management concerns caused by solar energy becoming operational. Last but not least, we support requiring IAC to establish a clearing house so that details on solar incentives, tax credits, alternative financing, etc. can be easily accessible.

It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

# **School Buildings – Solar Technology – Solar Panels**

Uploaded by: Laura Stewart

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted for the Record to the Maryland House of Delegates  
Appropriations Committee - For the Hearing on  
School Buildings – Solar Technology – Solar Panels on Schools (HB 0300)  
February 7, 2023  
SUPPORT**

Free State PTA represents over 50,000 volunteer members and families in over 500 public schools. Free State PTA is composed of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business as well as community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and family engagement in Maryland. As the state's premier and largest child advocacy organization, Free State PTA is a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families, schools and communities and a strong advocate for public education. ***House Bill 300 aligns with Free State PTA's environmental legislative agenda which supports using renewable energy sources and electrifying schools in order to move to a net zero model.***

House Bill 0300 would require local school education systems (LEA's) to provide an explanation for a decision not to include solar panels as part of the school construction to the Interagency Commission on School Construction. There are several benefits to investing in solar panels or other renewable energy sources when building schools. Switching to solar can bring significant cost savings over time which has been proven in other districts<sup>1</sup>. According to the U.S. Department of Energy estimates, K-12 schools spend more than \$8 billion per year on energy and energy costs in many districts are second only to salaries. Energy savings can free up much needed educational resources. Also, a solar powered school reduces pollutants in the environment and can move jurisdictions closer to their clean energy goals. Installing solar panels and moving towards net-zero schools gives the opportunity for students to learn about renewable energy and how they can make positive environmental impacts.

This bill does not require LEA's to install solar panels, it only requires LEA's to consider them when planning for construction, so therefore it is not a mandate. It is time we make a more concerted effort to build net-zero schools, and House Bill 0300 moves us to that goal.

Free State PTA urges a favorable vote in support of House Bill 0300.

***Marla Posey-Moss***

Marla Posey-Moss, President  
[mposey-moss@fspta.org](mailto:mposey-moss@fspta.org)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/climate/solar-energy-school-funding.html>

**HB300\_School Buildings Solar\_Approps\_CJW\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV





**Committee:** Appropriations  
**Testimony on:** HB0300 - School Buildings – Solar Technology – Solar Panels on Schools  
**Organization:** Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing  
**Submitting:** Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair  
**Position:** Favorable with Amendments  
**Hearing Date:** February 7, 2023

Dear Mr. Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today. The Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorable with amendments on HB300.

HB300 would establish new requirements for solar installation on schools for the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC). The time has never been better for solar installation on schools, and we encourage you to promote solar for schools. The Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 provides additional funds to build net zero schools, especially to augment funding to install solar panels. Additionally, the Inflation Reduction Act allows tax-exempt organizations, like schools, to take advantage of direct payment incentives (in lieu of tax credits), and grants are coming soon for EPA’s Clean Schools Program. There also are innovative financing opportunities such as demand response programs, alternative school financing, power purchase agreements, and community solar. Schools can take advantage of these funding opportunities, as well as benefit from the lower cost of electricity in the future, while they also contribute positively toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Finally, solar-powered electricity can be a teaching opportunity for Career Technology Education students and in science classes.

We urge you to consider the following amendments to strengthen HB300. First, include energy storage as part of the analysis. Electricity storage (i.e., batteries) will make schools more resilient during power outages and help with grid management issues related to increased renewable generation. Second, the requirements should extend to any school undergoing a roof replacement, as the main barrier to solar installation on existing schools is the age and condition of the roof. Third, the reporting should require collecting data on the cost of installation, the system size, and preferably best practices for sharing among schools. Finally, we encourage the IAC to be required to set up a clearinghouse so information on solar grants, tax credits, alternative financing, etc. can easily be accessed.

Schools can and should be part of the “climate solution” and can save money by installing solar panels. Therefore, we urge a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT** report for HB300.

**HB300\_MDSierraClub\_fav 7Feb2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mark Posner

Position: FAV



P.O. Box 278  
Riverdale, MD 20738

**Committee: Appropriations**

**Testimony on: HB300 “School Buildings – Solar Technology – Solar Panels on Schools”**

**Position: Support**

**Hearing Date: February 7, 2023**

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB300, which provides that Maryland school systems that construct new schools between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2034 must consider whether to include solar panels on the school rooftops and, if a school system decides not to include solar panels for a particular school, it must provide an explanation to the Interagency Commission on School Construction.

Last year, the General Assembly established ambitious climate goals for Maryland in the Climate Solutions Now Act, including reducing the state’s greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2031 (compared to the 2006 level) and achieving net-zero emissions by 2045. In order to meet these goals, it is imperative that Maryland significantly increase its generation of clean energy, including solar and offshore wind.

Schools can play an important role in this effort. By placing solar panels on school rooftops, school systems can be symbolic leaders in their communities to encourage solar expansion, including solar panels on residential and commercial rooftops, community solar, and utility-scale solar. In addition, solar panels on school rooftops may serve as a tangible example and learning experience for students, as they learn about the energy sector transformation needed to mitigate climate change.

This bill will ensure that school systems carefully consider whether to include solar in their school construction plans. One of the challenges in expanding rooftop solar is that the rooftop in question must be of a sufficient quality (e.g., it is not economical to place solar on an aging rooftop where, in a few years, the panels would need to be removed to repair the roof and then reinstalled). Another issue is that the rooftop must not be shaded, and should be oriented in a direction that maximizes exposure to the sun. Accordingly, an ideal time to include solar panels for a school is when the school is initially being built, when the rooftop will be new and the buildings can be designed to maximize the rooftop solar exposure.

We appreciate that one provision of the bill is that the Interagency Commission will be required to publish a list of schools built during the covered time period without solar panels, together with the explanations provided by the school districts for why solar panels were not included. This may provide valuable feedback to identify any obstacles to including solar panels in schools, which in turn may help identify solutions or work-arounds.

At the front end, when school systems are considering whether to include solar panels, it would be helpful for the bill to also promote a degree of transparency, so that school communities can

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

provide input on this important decision. We encourage the sponsor to consider an appropriate amendment in this regard.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on this bill.

Mark Posner  
Clean Energy Team Lead  
mposner5719@gmail.com

Josh Tulkin  
Chapter Director  
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

**HB0300-DTMG-FAV-2-7-23.pdf**

Uploaded by: Olivia Bartlett

Position: FAV



**Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team**

**Committee:** Appropriations

**Testimony on:** HB0300– School Buildings - Solar Technology - Solar Panels on Schools

**Position:** Favorable

**Hearing Date:** February 7, 2023

**Bill Contact:** Delegate Harry Bhandari

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with members in all districts in Montgomery County as well as several neighboring counties. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep all Maryland residents healthy and safe in a clean environment and which promote equity across all our diverse communities. HB0300 addresses these goals by incentivizing the switch to clean renewable energy in Maryland.

The School Construction legislation passed two years ago provided funding for construction of new schools and upgrades for existing schools. Constructing a new school or replacing the roof on an existing school without installing solar panels is foolish considering the multiple incentives available and the imperative to reduce the greenhouse gasses causing global warming as quickly as possible.

The financial benefits of solar on school budgets due to the projected increase in fossil fuel costs over the long term are reason enough to invest in solar technology. The Climate Solutions Now Act passed last session provides additional funds to build net zero schools which would require rooftop solar. The Inflation Reduction Act also allows tax-exempt organizations, like schools, to take advantage of solar tax credits and grants are coming soon for EPA's clean schools program. There is also innovative financing, like participation in demand response programs, alternative school financing, power purchase agreements, and community solar, which schools can evaluate in order to install solar panels.

Furthermore, solar technology can be used as a teaching opportunity for Career Technology Education students and students learning the sciences, which will help provide a workforce for the building decarbonization that we already are required to undertake.

Maryland should encourage and enhance solar energy production and installing solar panels on schools is one way to do that. Failure to do so sends the wrong message to Maryland's children – that we don't care about their future and that we can't act in our own best interest. Schools should also consider installation of energy storage, which would make them more resilient during power outages and help offset grid management issues with solar coming online.

For all these reasons, DTMG strongly supports HB0300 and encourages a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Bartlett  
DoTheMostGood Maryland Team  
[olviabartlett@verizon.net](mailto:olviabartlett@verizon.net)  
240-751-5599

# **HB300\_IndivisibleHoCoMD\_FAV\_RichardDeutschmann.pdf**

Uploaded by: Richard Deutschmann

Position: FAV





## **HB300 – School Buildings - Solar Technology - Solar Panels on Schools**

**Testimony before**

**House Appropriations Committee**

**February 7, 2023**

**Position: Favorable**

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Richard Deutschmann, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in support of **HB300**, to encourage the use of solar energy systems on our newly constructed schools. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Del. Bhandari for sponsoring this important legislation.

This bill simply requires local school boards, when in the process of designing and building a new school facility in their jurisdictions, to strongly consider the use of modern, clean solar energy systems to provide electrical power or domestic hot water for the building. And, if they choose not to move ahead with solar energy, that they provide a written report to the Interagency Commission explaining why they decided not to include this in their facility planning. Many school boards in the state of Maryland are appropriately focused on budgets, capital expenditures for new facilities, and funding for ongoing operations of these complex sectors of the county or jurisdiction. However, many of them downplay or minimize the opportunity and need for sustainability, clean energy and long term energy planning. In addition, our students could be attending schools where clean energy systems are operational, providing a chance to study the data and learn about these clean energy generation systems. Some may still be in the “demonstration” phase, while as a state, we need our schools to be full partners in execution of clean energy and other sustainability goals. As a result, many of them are behind in meeting statewide goals for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. This bill will encourage a greater use of clean energy in our school systems, while improving opportunities for our students to learn about solutions to the global climate crisis.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Richard Deutschmann  
Columbia, MD 21045

# **HB0300 - Solar on Schools - Climate Parents of Pri**

Uploaded by: Joseph Jakuta

Position: FWA

**Committee: Appropriations**

**Testimony on: HB 300 - "School Buildings – Solar Technology – Solar Panels on Schools"**

**Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's**

**Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer**

**Position: Favorable With Amendments**

**Hearing Date: February 7, 2023**



Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony to HB 300, which concerns new requirements for the Interagency on School Construction (IAC) to consider for solar installation on schools. Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change causing pollution in our schools, and our group is active in Prince George's County. In particular, we recently worked directly with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a first in the national School Climate Change Action Plan.

The time is right for solar installation on schools. The Climate Solutions Now Act passed last session provides additional funds to build net zero schools, which often did not pencil out due to solar costs. The Inflation Reduction Act also allows tax-exempt organizations, like schools, to take advantage of solar tax credits and grants are coming soon for EPA's clean schools program. And then there is innovative financing like participation in demand response programs, alternative school financing, power purchase agreements, and community solar, all of which schools can examine.

There are so many benefits of solar on schools too. In light of volatile fuel and electricity prices solar can have a real positive impact on school budgets. Solar can be used as a teaching opportunity for Career Technology Education students and students learning the sciences. There are also the state-wide benefits of reducing the amount of pollution from power production.

1. There should be requirements that energy storage also be required to be considered as part of the analysis. Storage, namely batteries, will make schools more resilient during power outages and help offset grid management issues with solar coming online.
2. The requirements should extend to any school that is undergoing a roof replacement. The main barrier to solar installation on existing schools is roof age
3. We encourage the reporting to require collecting data on cost of install and unit size and preferably collection of best practices for sharing information.
4. There have also been favorable outcomes from having a small portion of the solar panels accessible for STEM learning and allowing the students to view information about solar generation, as was done at Holabird Academy in Baltimore. We encourage the IAC to give consideration for this element in design submissions.
5. Finally, we encourage IAC to be required to set up a clearing house so that information on solar grants, tax credits, alternative financing, etc. can easily be found by all twenty-four LEAs.

Now is the time for us to act. Schools will save money and bring hope and knowledge to the next generation through the path outlined in HB 300.

We encourage a **FAVORABLE with Amendment** report for this important legislation.

# **HB0300 - FWA - School Buildings – Solar Technology**

Uploaded by: Landon Fahrig

Position: FWA



**TO:** Members, House Appropriations Committee  
**FROM:** Paul Pinsky - Director, MEA  
**SUBJECT:** HB 300 - School Buildings – Solar Technology – Solar Panels on Schools  
**DATE:** February 7, 2023

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**MEA Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

House Bill 300 requires local schools systems to consider whether to construct new schools with solar panels on the roofs of the schools, and provide to the Interagency Commission on School Construction an explanation for a decision not to include solar panels as part of the construction of a school.

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) commends this legislation and the efforts of the sponsor. However, it may be appropriate to become more aggressive with the implementation of solar on new-construction schools.

Currently, Education Article § 5-319(a) already requires “[a]n evaluation of the use of solar technologies, including photovoltaic or solar water heating, based on life cycle costs” during the design phase for both school renovation and new school construction. Similar to this bill, that provision of law requires “a report that explains why the use of the technology is not appropriate” if “an evaluation determines that solar technologies are not appropriate for a construction or major renovation project”.

**MEA amendments would *require* that all new school construction to include rooftop solar installations** unless a local school board can demonstrate an actual impediment to the effective generation of electricity using a solar photovoltaic installation.

On-site energy generation provides a myriad of benefits. Generating energy where it is used reduces the need for additional transmission and distribution investments, combining onsite generation with storage or other energy assets can make buildings, or even campuses, more resilient to catastrophic events, and the deployment of renewable energy helps us, as a State, reach our energy and environmental policy goals.

For the foregoing reasons, MEA urges the committee to issue a **favorable report as amended**.

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 19, before “construction” insert an opening bracket; and in the same line, after “or” insert a closing bracket.

On page 2, strike beginning with “CONSIDER” in line 6 down through “SCHOOL” in line 13 and substitute “, **EXCEPT AS SPECIFIED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, INSTALL ROOFTOP SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS ON ALL NEWLY CONSTRUCTED SCHOOLS.**”

**(2) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM MAY PETITION THE INTERAGENCY COMMISSION TO EXCLUDE A NEW SCHOOL FROM PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION ONLY BY A SHOWING THAT A SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM IS NOT FEASIBLE DUE TO A LACK OF SOLAR INCIDENCE.”**

# **HB0300 Interlineated Copy.pdf**

Uploaded by: Landon Fahrig

Position: FWA

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

15 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

16 Article – Education

17 5–319.

18 (a) The Interagency Commission shall adopt regulations that require the design  
19 development documents for the construction or major renovation of school buildings  
20 submitted by a county board to the Interagency Commission to include:

21 (1) An evaluation of the use of solar technologies, including photovoltaic or  
22 solar water heating, based on life cycle costs; and

\*\*\*Page 2\*\*\*

1 (2) If an evaluation determines that solar technologies are not appropriate  
2 for a construction or major renovation project, a report that explains why the use of the  
3 technology is not appropriate.

4 (B) (1) FOR EACH SCHOOL CONSTRUCTED BY A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM  
5 FROM JULY 1, 2025, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2034, BOTH INCLUSIVE, THE LOCAL

6 SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL ~~CONSIDER WHETHER THE SCHOOL SHOULD BE~~

7 ~~CONSTRUCTED WITH SOLAR PANELS ON THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL.~~

8 (2) ~~IF, AFTER CONSIDERING INSTALLING SOLAR PANELS IN~~

9 ~~ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM~~

10 ~~DECIDES NOT TO HAVE SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED ON THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL,~~

11 ~~THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL PROVIDE TO THE INTERAGENCY COMMISSION~~

12 ~~AN EXPLANATION FOR THE DECISION NOT TO INCLUDE SOLAR PANELS AS PART OF~~

13 ~~THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHOOL, EXCEPT AS SPECIFIED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS~~  
14 ~~SUBSECTION, INSTALL ROOFTOP SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS ON ALL NEWLY CONSTRUCTED~~  
15 ~~SCHOOLS.~~

(2) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM MAY PETITION THE INTERAGENCY COMMISSION TO  
EXCLUDE A NEW SCHOOL FROM PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION ONLY BY A SHOWING THAT A  
SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM IS NOT FEASIBLE DUE TO A LACK OF SOLAR INCIDENCE.

14 [(b)] (C) On or before December 31 of each year, the Interagency Commission  
15 shall submit a report [on the number of public school construction and major renovation  
16 projects in each jurisdiction that use solar technologies] to the Governor and, in accordance  
17 with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the [General Assembly] **PRESIDENT OF**  
18 **THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE THAT SPECIFIES:**

19 (1) **THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR**  
20 **RENOVATION PROJECTS IN EACH JURISDICTION THAT USE SOLAR TECHNOLOGIES;**  
21 **AND**

22 (2) **A LIST OF PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR**  
23 **RENOVATION PROJECTS IN EACH JURISDICTION IN WHICH A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM**  
24 **DECIDED NOT TO HAVE SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED ON THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL,**  
25 **INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION FOR THE DECISION BY EACH JURISDICTION NOT TO**  
26 **INCLUDE SOLAR PANELS AS PART OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHOOL.**



27 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 28 1, 2023.