

Carrington 2023 Testimony SB469 - Task Force to St

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: FAV



CARRINGTON & ASSOCIATES, LLC

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SB469 – Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

FAVORABLE

Carrington & Associates, LLC, requests a FAVORABLE report for SB469. This bill establishes a Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives. The task force must study and make recommendations regarding a tax strategy that is more competitive than the State's current strategy to (1) maximize the installation of rooftop solar panels; (2) facilitate and promote installation of grid-connected generation of renewable energy; and (3) meet the State's renewable energy goals. Members of the task force may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) must provide staff for the task force, and the Director of MEA must designate its chair. The task force is required to report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by December 15, 2023.

We would like to thank Senators Elfreth, and Guzzone for bringing this important legislation forward. Our firm works closely businesses, and environmental groups that would like to see Maryland take a giant leap forward with respect to incentivizing investments, and use of solar energy. Our firm believes this task force is a step in the right direction.

For the stated reasons, we ask for a FAVORABLE report on SB469.

Please feel free to contact Darrell Carrington, Managing Director, at darrell.carrington@verizon.net, if you have any questions and/or would like additional information.

SB469_FAV_CHESSA.pdf

Uploaded by: Elly Cowan

Position: FAV



February 20, 2023

Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: CHESSA Letter of Support of SB 469

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee:

The Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association (CHESSA) appreciates the opportunity to recommend a favorable report of HB 68. CHESSA is a member organization that represents over 120 companies engaged in all facets of the solar and battery storage industry throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

As the fiscal note illuminates, Maryland has already taken many crucial steps to reduce the tax burden on renewable energy projects in Maryland. CHESSA greatly appreciates the work and leadership of the Chair and of Senator Elfreth to consult with the solar industry to explore remaining ways that tax burden could be addressed and relieved by this Committee. CHESSA supports SB 469 and with the scope of the task force to “maximize the installation of rooftop solar panels, to facilitate and promote installation of grid-connected generation of renewable energy, and to meet the State’s renewable energy goals.”

The siting of renewable energy resources is of growing concern across the nation and has been a source of tension between the solar industry and counties. CHESSA is aware of active astroturfing efforts to spread misinformation about the impacts of solar farms, nationally, but we acknowledge that there are also legitimate policy priorities that inform local land use decisions. CHESSA believes that the task force is a practical, smart approach to create an incentive pathway to accelerate the utilization of solar energy at low-friction sites (e.g., rooftops, brownfields, parking canopies) while the industry simultaneously works to achieve the appropriate balance between solar development and conservation of Maryland’s natural resources and natural beauty. Often, localities look to guidance from the State in terms of the proper way to value and tax these systems. Without this guidance, local assessors are left trying to compare solar energy generation systems with other more typical facilities in their locality, such as commercial and industrial buildings, which leads to undue tax burden on solar energy generation that significantly hinder deployment.

Rooftop solar tends to face lower interconnection costs, particularly for small-scale residential installations, and can be scaled up quickly if local building permitting processes are equipped to handle the volume. Even so, CHESSA cautions that reliance on rooftop solar and siting in the built environment will not be sufficient to meet Maryland's ambitious solar deployment goals. In order to keep along the path of being a leader in combating climate change and having a diverse energy mix, Maryland will need to leverage residential, commercial, community, and large-scale solar.

For these reasons, CHESSA supports SB 469 and would hope to assist the work of the task force in identifying the best tax incentive mechanisms to effectively incentivize the rapid deployment of solar on preferred, low-friction sites. Solar facilities are inherently different than commercial buildings and operations, as they provide a much needed service in the form of local energy generation but do not burden local infrastructure in the terms of traffic or use of local services. As the industry strives to find solutions to the larger siting challenges in Maryland, it is important to scale up and accelerate deployment of solar along these paths of least resistance, and believe the State has the opportunity to provide guidance and leadership.

CHESSA appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments in support of SB 469 and welcomes further dialogue with the Chair and the Members of the Committee on achieving Maryland's critical renewable energy goals.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
Thadeus B. Culley
Sr. Manager, Public Policy, Sunrun
CHESSA Maryland Policy Committee Chair

/s/
Stephanie Johnson
Executive Director, CHESSA

SB 469 - FAV - MML.pdf

Uploaded by: Justin Fiore

Position: FAV



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 21, 2023

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill: SB 469 – Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

Position: Support

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League supports Senate Bill 469, which would establish the Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives with the goal of identifying a tax strategy that is more competitive than the State's current strategy.

Combatting climate change has been a strategic initiative of our cities and towns for the past several years. Ensuring solar is competitive is a critical component of making the switch to more renewable sources of energy. The League appreciates and favors this approach to a patchwork of state and local tax credits and is grateful for a seat at the table.

Therefore, MML respectfully requests that this committee provide a favorable report on SB 469.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Theresa Kuhns

Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.

Bill Jorch

Justin Fiore

Chief Executive Officer

Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

Director, Public Policy

Deputy Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

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SB469 Task Force Study Solar Tax Incentives_Budget

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV



Committee: Budget and Taxation
Testimony on: SB469 – Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 21, 2022

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB469. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorable with amendments on SB469.

SB469 establishes a Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives and make recommendations to the General Assembly by December 15, 2023 on improving the State’s tax strategy to maximize rooftop solar installation; promote the installation of grid-connected renewable energy; and meet the State’s renewable energy goals.

Currently, Maryland’s solar energy tax incentives include four types: 1) sales and use tax exemption; 2) property tax exemption; 3) assessment (for property tax purposes) of solar energy heating and cooling systems; and 4) authorization of local property tax credit. These incentives are designed to promote solar energy generation and to help the State meet its Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) carve-out for solar.

In 2023, the RPS requirement is 31.9% from Tier 1 sources, including at least 6.0% from solar. Electric utilities and other electricity suppliers must submit renewable energy credits equal to a percentage of their retail electricity sales or pay an alternative compliance payment for the shortfall. This year, there is an unprecedented level of alternative compliance payment funds, because electric utilities and suppliers have missed the RPS goals. SB469 establishes a taskforce to study the existing tax incentives for solar and make recommendations on how those incentives can be strengthened to promote more solar generation in Maryland.

We recommend a **FAVORABLE** report for SB469 in committee.

MBIA Letter of Support SB 469.pdf

Uploaded by: Lori Graf

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building,
3 West Wing 11 Bladen St.,
Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: MBIA Letter of Support SB 469 Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

Dear Chairman Guzzone:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **SB 469 Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives**. **MBIA Supports** the Act in its current version.

This bill would establish a task force to study Solar Tax Incentives. MBIA Wholeheartedly supports this measure. One of the major issues with making buildings more efficient and energy independent is the additional cost that raises the prices for consumers. Studying how best to offer incentives to combat this problem for both industrial and rooftop solar is a key feature in understanding how to make Maryland more energy independent without making it more expensive and exclusive. MBIA supports any information gathering effort that will make it easier to make informed choices about how we develop our energy infrastructure so that it is both cost effective and helps achieve the goal of reducing fossile fuel dependency.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

SB469_MDSierraClub_fav 21Feb2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Posner

Position: FAV



P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Budget and Taxation
Testimony on: SB469 “Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives”
Position: Support
Hearing Date: February 21, 2023

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report on SB469. The bill will establish a task force to “study and make recommendations regarding a tax strategy that is more competitive than the State’s current strategy to maximize the installation of rooftop solar panels, to facilitate and promote installation of grid-connected generation of renewable energy, and to meet the State’s renewable energy goals.” The task force is to report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly before the end of this year.

We recommend that the task force membership be expanded to include one or two representatives of environmental organizations that focus on clean energy development. It is a common practice for the General Assembly to include environmental organization representatives on task forces and study groups it establishes to examine environmental issues.

The General Assembly has established as a target that solar energy should constitute 14.5% of the State’s energy consumption by 2030. The PSC estimates that the 14.5% amount represents about 6,200 megawatts (MW) of solar. This is the minimum needed to meet Maryland’s greenhouse gas reduction goal of a 60% reduction (compared to 2006 levels) by 2031, a goal set last year by the Climate Solutions Now Act.

For a variety of reasons, however, Maryland’s solar development has not met the State’s year-by-year interim targets for achieving the 14.5% target.¹ The Solar Energy Industries Association estimates that Maryland had about 1,600 MW of solar at the end of 2022; this means that Maryland will need to develop 4,600 MW of solar from 2023 to 2030 to achieve the 14.5% target. This would require Maryland to more than double its current rate of solar development.

Accordingly, Maryland needs to accelerate its development of solar energy. This should include increases in the full complement of ways in which solar arrays are built: rooftop solar (on homes, multifamily dwellings, commercial buildings, and parking lots); community solar; and utility scale solar (appropriately sited). In turn, increasing these development rates requires a strategic package of actions by the State.

¹ Recently, at least in part due to the COVID pandemic, the cost of installing solar panels on rooftops has substantially increased. Other forms of solar development also have been negatively impacted by the cost increases. In addition, there are growth limitations on the current community solar pilot program, and utility-scale solar projects have encountered significant delays in receiving the requisite grid-connection approvals from the PJM regional transmission system (there are about six gigawatts of proposed Maryland solar generation projects on hold at PJM while that entity works through its queue of applications).

One of the actions needed is the creation of additional incentives for rooftop solar. Accordingly, we testified on January 19 before this Committee in support of legislation introduced by Senator Ellis, SB103, to establish an income tax credit for new residential rooftop solar arrays.

There also are several other important bills before the General Assembly that would assist with increasing solar development in Maryland, and which the Maryland Sierra Club strongly supports. These include SB613, sponsored by Senator Brooks, to make permanent the community solar pilot program and expand its reach; and SB357, sponsored by Senator Klausmeier, to maintain the current value of solar Alternative Compliance Payments and thereby maintain the value of Maryland's solar financial incentive, the Solar Renewable Energy Credit.²

Maryland has set ambitious goals for transitioning to clean energy. To do this successfully, given the reality of constrained budgets, it will be important for policymakers to have reliable information on available options, including their scale (expected reduction of greenhouse gas emissions), cost-efficiency, timing, and distributional impacts. We believe that the task force proposed by this legislation can provide these types of information in considering how to incentivize rooftop solar installations.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB469.

Mark Posner
Clean Energy Team Lead
mposner5719@gmail.com

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

² We also support a proposal we understand is under consideration for the Joint Chairmen's budget report to require a study on constructing new solar capacity at BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport and Martin State Airport; developing solar arrays at airports has shown promise elsewhere (see, e.g., A. Zipkin, "Seeking Space for Solar Farms, Cities Find Room at Their Airports," *New York Times*, December 7, 2021). In addition, we are supporting a House bill (HB891) to require an organizational assessment of the Public Service Commission ("PSC") to consider, among other things, the PSC's capacity to advance grid-connection and development of solar projects.

SB 469_CBF_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Matt Stegman

Position: FAV



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

Senate Bill 469

Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

Date: February 21, 2023

To: Budget & Taxation Committee

Position: **Favorable**

From: Matt Stegman

Maryland Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 469 which establishes a task force to study Maryland's tax incentives for solar energy generation and use. The task force will make a report with recommendations to the General Assembly ahead of the 2024 legislative session.

CBF generally supports accelerating the transition to solar power as a way to reduce greenhouse gases from the combustion of fossil fuels which are causing climate instability and oxides of nitrogen, which become bay pollutants when it rains. However, in some instances solar projects present a risk of adverse impacts on forests or the loss of environmentally beneficial farmland.¹ Establishing the task force created by SB 469 is a prudent decision and will help ensure that Maryland's tax incentives for solar energy align with the state's other environmental priorities and are designed to be attractive to consumers and the industry alike.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 469.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at mstegman@cbf.org.

¹ For additional information on solar best practices, see "Principles and Practices for Realizing the Necessity and Promise of Solar Power.", *Chesapeake Bay Foundation*, April 2020, <https://www.cbf.org/document-library/cbf-guides-fact-sheets/principles-and-practices-for-solar-power.pdf>

Maryland Office • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis • Maryland • 21403

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.

SB 469 Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives (F

Uploaded by: Michelle Dietz

Position: FAV

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

TO: Guy Guzzone, Chair of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee; and Committee Members
FROM: Michelle Dietz, The Nature Conservancy, Director of Government Relations; and Cait Kerr, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation & Climate Policy Analyst
POSITION: Support SB 469 - Task Force to Study Solar Incentives

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports SB 469 offered by Senator Elfreth and Chair Guzzone. In Maryland, TNC's work focuses on delivering science-based, on-the-ground solutions that secure clean water and healthy living environments for our communities, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing resilience in the face of a changing climate. TNC has an institutional goal to help to reduce emissions by avoiding or sequestering 3 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide per year by 2030. We are dedicated to a future where people and nature thrive together.

SB 469 would establish a Task Force to better understand how Maryland can deploy and implement a tax strategy to maximize the use of rooftop solar. This Task Force will look at how to maximize panel installation, how to promote connectivity for renewable energy generated by rooftop solar to the grid, and how solar energy can lend itself to meeting Maryland's renewable energy goals. Task Force membership will include Maryland state government officials, including members of General Assembly and the Secretary of the Maryland Energy Administration. In addition, other Task Force members will represent Maryland's counties, the solar energy industry, and individuals with experience in solar installations, thereby equipping the Task Force with local and on-the-ground expertise.

The Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 set state goals to reduce emissions by 60% by 2031 and reach net-zero by 2045. Governor Moore has set an even more ambitious goal for 100% renewable energy by 2035. These goals are achievable, but only by boldly and aggressively supporting renewable energy development, especially solar, even as we look to protect our cherished forests and the farmlands we rely on for our agricultural economy. In order to meet these goals, Maryland needs to take immediate actions to mitigate emissions in the state's highest producing sectors. Renewable energy sources and a clean energy economy are essential parts of reaching state, national, and global low-carbon energy goals and combatting the negative health and environmental impacts caused by fossil fuels. By establishing a Task Force to study solar tax incentives, Maryland can position itself to implement the best possible strategies in our state to maximize renewable solar energy generation and usage across the state. Maryland decisionmakers can use this study's information and recommendations to work toward achieving our state's ambitious emissions reductions goals.

TNC commends Senator Elfreth and Chair Guzzone for continuing to raise the bar for Maryland's climate commitments and advancing climate solutions that can provide valuable environmental, economic, and public health co-benefits for years to come.

Therefore, we urge a favorable report on SB 469.

MD Catholic Conference_FAV_SB0469.pdf

Uploaded by: MJ Kraska

Position: FAV



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 21, 2023

SB 469

Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 469 establishes a Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives. The task force must study and make recommendations regarding a tax strategy that is more competitive than the State's current strategy to (1) maximize the installation of rooftop solar panels; (2) facilitate and promote installation of grid-connected generation of renewable energy; and (3) meet the State's renewable energy goals. Members of the task force may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) must provide staff for the task force, and the Director of MEA must designate its chair. The task force is required to report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by December 15, 2023.

As Pope Francis has written, climate change "*represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day*" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 25), threatening the wellbeing of peoples and the environment. Catholic social teaching envisions a sustainable and authentic human development, where technological solutions respect the principle of integral ecology and consider social, economic and ecological considerations.

Senate Bill 469 aims to address the much-needed investment in renewable energy policies to be set to sustain and achieve a healthy global ecosystem. We encourage discussion around the components and goals outlined in this legislation and hope they are a catalyst for positive social and ecological outcomes.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 469.

Elfreth_FAV_SB469.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Elfreth

Position: FAV

SENATOR SARAH ELFRETH
Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Pensions

Chair, Public Safety,
Transportation, and Environment

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area

Chair, Joint Subcommittee on
Program Open Space/Agricultural
Land Preservation



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Sarah.Elfreth@senate.state.md.us

February 21, 2023

Testimony in Favor of SB469
Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget & Taxation Committee,

I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 469 to create a task force to investigate the impacts of tax incentives on the increasingly important solar industry. This bill will provide the State with valuable data and allow the General Assembly to make better informed policy decisions to aid the growth of renewable energy in Maryland and allow us to take a more strategic approach on how we use the tax system to strategically determine solar deployment.

In order to meet the emissions and renewable energy goals set by the State, it is vital that the solar industry continues to grow and that Marylanders have access to affordable clean energy. Solar energy produces extremely low amounts of environmental pollution in comparison to fossil fuels¹, making it an effective tool to confront the threat of climate change.

Maryland is currently making progress in developing our clean energy infrastructure. The Community Solar Pilot Program has enabled Marylanders to create projects that provide clean energy to low-to moderate-income households². We have also been able to attract private energy companies to the state and encourage nonprofits to work on solar energy projects. Last year, CI Renewables moved its headquarters to Baltimore, MD due to its strong customer base in Maryland.

Despite the success with increasing solar energy production, our current tax laws potentially limit the amount of competition in this sector and raise energy costs for homeowners. To

¹ <https://www.nachi.org/advantages-solar-energy.htm>

² <https://mupj.org/2023/01/19/expand-solar-energy-in-maryland-make-community-solar-permanent/>

continue to encourage the use of renewable energy sources, we must ensure that our tax policies successfully incentivize Maryland families, nonprofits, and businesses to invest in this emerging industry.

While the industry is growing, Maryland must be ever-vigilant to ensure that such growth does not result in externalities that can be harmful to our environment, such as the clear-cutting of forest land or the over-utilization of prime agricultural lands for ground-mounted solar.

This legislation will form a task force composed of public officials from the General Assembly, local leaders, relevant state agencies, and representatives from the solar industry. The task force will complete a one-year study of state solar tax policies and present their findings to the General Assembly. Along with the results of their study, they will offer recommendations outlining how we should reform our tax laws to make the industry more competitive and reach our renewable energy goals.

Promoting the use of clean energy is one of the most important and urgent issues that this State is facing. Passage of this Bill will allow experts across the state to complete comprehensive research on this topic and develop evidence-based policies to provide for safe, clean, sustainable, and strategic energy production.

Thank you, and once again, I request a favorable report of Senate Bill 469.

BaltimoreCounty_FAV_SB0469.pdf

Uploaded by: Twana Allen

Position: FAV



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG
Associate Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: SB 469

TITLE: Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

SPONSOR: Senator Elfreth

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 21, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 469 – Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives. This legislation would establish the Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives.

SB 469 would establish a task force to study and make recommendations regarding a tax strategy that is more competitive than the current state strategy to maximize grid-connected generation of renewable energy and to meet the RPS. The membership of the task force is well balanced between authoritative agencies and relevant industries, including the Senate of Maryland, State House of Delegates, MEA, the PSC, and SDAT.

By implementing a deliberative review of the State’s current solar tax incentives, SB 469 would empower Maryland to be a leader in attracting more sources of clean, renewable energy for years to come.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 469. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.

SB 0469, FAV, OCE Testimony, JF, LS23.pdf

Uploaded by: Victoria Venable

Position: FAV



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

SB 0469 - Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

DATE: February 21, 2023
COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

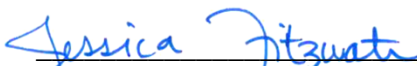
As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **SB 0469 - Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives** a favorable report.

This bill would establish a Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives and make recommendations regarding a tax strategy that is more competitive than the State's current strategy.

As our communities work to balance the need to shift to renewable energy as a way to mitigate climate change with the need to conserve farmland, forest land, and open space, tax incentives can be an effective tool. Maryland has a long history of using financial incentives to stimulate the clean energy industry and make commercial and residential solar more financially attractive. As the landscape of this industry changes and we continue moving towards our Renewable Portfolio Standard goals, it is imperative that we make the most out of our tax strategy.

SB 0469 is an important step towards strengthening this tool. As the County Executive of Frederick County, where balancing clean energy production and conservation is particularly important to my constituents, I commend the sponsor for enumerating a balanced list of members for the proposed Task Force. I believe it is crucially important that local leaders contribute to this conversation and the allocation of membership to both the Maryland Association of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League ensures that local voices will be at the table.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 0469. I urge the committee to give SB 0469 a favorable report.



Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD

SB 0469_IndivisibleHoCoMD_FAV_VirginiaSmith.pdf

Uploaded by: Virginia Smith

Position: FAV



SB469 – Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

Testimony before

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

February 21, 2023

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of SB469**, which would establish a task force to study solar tax incentives. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Senators Elfreth and Guzzone in sponsoring this important legislation.

The state of Maryland passed legislation in 2019 that mandated the state to get half of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030, and while campaigning, current Governor Moore pledged to be at 100% clean energy by 2035. To meet either goal, the state will need to better incentivize the use of renewable energy. This task force would study and make recommendations regarding the states' strategy as it relates to solar energy, with the aim to make it more competitive than the current strategy. However, it would also consider the incentives in light of the need to preserve the state's agricultural land and forest land. It would be a fast-acting task force that would be required to complete its report by December 15, 2023, and on June 30, 2024 the act will be repealed.

For these reasons, we support SB469.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Virginia Smith
Columbia, MD 21044

SB 469 Favorable W Amendments.pdf

Uploaded by: Balfour Albacarys

Position: FWA

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

AFFILIATED WITH:

Baltimore-D.C. Metro Building Trades Council — AFL-CIO
Baltimore Port Council
Baltimore Metro Council — AFL-CIO
Central MD Labor Council — AFL-CIO
Del-Mar-Va Labor Council — AFL-CIO
Maryland State - D.C. — AFL-CIO
National Safety Council



AFL-CIO-CLC

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

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Written Testimony of

Rico Albacarys, Assistant Business Agent, IBEW LOCAL 24

Before the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee On

SB 469 Task Force To Study Solar Incentives

Favorable With Amendment

February 20, 2023

Chairman Guzzone and Committee Members,

I support SB 469 with the amendment of adding labor representatives to the Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives. Including labor representatives will ensure that the needs and interests of workers in the solar industry are considered, bringing valuable insights into creating a sustainable and equitable solar industry in our state.

The Task Force's work is crucial in promoting rooftop solar panels, grid-connected renewable energy, and meeting the State's renewable energy goals. A more competitive tax strategy would encourage investment in solar energy, creating jobs and contributing to a more sustainable future for our state.

Therefore, I urge you to vote favorably on SB 469, with the **proposed amendment** of adding labor representatives.

Sincerely,

Rico Albacarys

Assistant Business Agent IBEW Local 24

SB 469 - Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives.

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FWA



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

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President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**SB 469 - Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
February 21, 2023**

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

**Donna S. Edwards
President**

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 469 with amendments. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

The Maryland taxpayer is an investor in businesses throughout the State. SB 469 takes an important step forward by studying the effectiveness of the state's tax incentives and makes recommendations to the General Assembly. Just as the industry's participation is important on the task force, we believe that labor's voice is essential to this process and recommend the following amendment:

Add the following language on Page 2, Line 18:

“(9) two representatives of organized labor, designated by the Maryland State & DC AFL-CIO.”

For the future of green jobs, we seek amendments to SB 469.

OPC Testimony SB0469.pdf

Uploaded by: Mollie Soloway

Position: FWA

DAVID S. LAPP
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BILL NO.: Senate Bill 469
Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives

COMMITTEE: Budget & Taxation

HEARING DATE: February 21, 2023

SPONSOR: Senators Elfreth & Guzzone

POSITION: Favorable with Amendment

The Office of People’s Counsel (OPC) supports Senate Bill 469 with an amendment. SB 469 will create a broad-based task force of government and private entities to analyze and make recommendations to the General Assembly on the use of tax incentives to facilitate and promote the installation of grid connected renewable energy projects. The development of more renewable energy projects will assist the State in meeting the goals of the Renewable Portfolio Standard and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Encouraging renewable energy developers to locate projects—particularly utility scale solar projects—on less productive land, such as rooftops, brownfields, and abandoned mining sites, is an important way to avoid conflicts between the expansion of solar projects, on the one hand, and the preservation of natural resources and removal of highly productive land from agricultural uses, on the other, ultimately allowing for the siting of more solar projects. A number of other states have adopted tax strategies to incentivize the location of solar projects, and OPC supports the development of such incentives here in Maryland.

OPC respectfully requests that the Budget and Taxation Committee consider an amendment adding the People’s Counsel or the People’s Counsel’s designee as a member of the Task Force. OPC represents the interests of residential customers in Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) proceedings before the Public Service Commission. OPC also has an interest in the expanded development of renewable energy

projects to increase the availability of those sources for electricity generation in the State. As such, we are well-positioned to assist the Task Force in its important work seeking to maximize the potential for solar development and to meet the State's renewable energy goals. This addition would also be consistent with the bill's inclusion of the State's other energy policy agencies, the Public Service Commission and the Maryland Energy Administration.

Recommendation: OPC requests a favorable report with an amendment for SB 469.

CCSA testimony_SB 0469.pdf

Uploaded by: Rob Garagiola

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RE: Senate Bill 0469 – Task Force to Study Tax Incentives

Favorable with Amendments

Chair Guzzone, Senator Elfreth, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

The Coalition for Community Solar Access (CCSA) provides this written testimony regarding Senate Bill (SB) 0469. CCSA's position on this legislation is Favorable with Amendment, as outlined below and attached.

CCSA is a national, business-led trade organization, composed of over 100 member companies, that works to expand access to clean, local, affordable energy nationwide through the development of robust community solar programs. Today, the majority of households and businesses do not have access to solar because they rent, live in multitenant buildings, have roofs that are unable to host a solar system, are shaded by trees, or experience some other mitigating factor. Community solar provides a solution to this gap by allowing local solar facilities to be shared by multiple community subscribers who receive credit on their electricity bills for their share of the power produced.

CCSA has been an active participant in the development and implementation of Maryland's community solar pilot program. Community solar is in high demand in Maryland, as demonstrated over the first six years of the pilot program which has resulted in over four hundred megawatts of reserved capacity that is either under development or in operation.

Senator Elfreth and Chair Guzzone's SB 0469 would: (1) establish a Task Force to Study Solar Tax Incentives to study and make recommendations regarding a tax strategy that is more competitive than the current strategy to maximize the installation of rooftop solar panels, to facilitate and promote installation of grid-connected generation of renewable energy, and to meet the state's renewable energy goals; and 2) require the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly one or before December 15, 2023. CCSA seeks one amendment to clarify that maximizing community solar should also be an objective of this Task Force and study. See the attached amendment for the bill.

With this amendment, CCSA supports the passage of SB 0469. We look forward to working with Chair Guzzone, members of the committee, and all interested parties to achieve this technical fix in a manner that includes all solar segments who are active in achieving the state's clean energy goals.

Sincerely,

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**Coalition for Community Solar Access
Proposed Amendment to SB 0469**

AMENDMENT

On page 2, on line 27, after “rooftop solar panels”, insert the following: “and community solar energy generating systems”.

Explanation: The purpose of this amendment is to clarify that the scope and purpose of the Task Force shall also include the maximization of community solar in meeting the State’s renewable energy goals.