



Testimony SB1082:

Solar Energy and Energy Storage - Development and State Procurement

Position: SUPPORT

March 7, 2024

Dear Chair Feldman and EEE,

Two primary challenges to growing the solar industry are land use siting and the long-term procurement of the electricity produced. This legislation would create a path to predictability in the former and encourage the state to take a more active role in procuring solar going forward.

In the jurisdictions we build solar, we have seen numerous changes to the local zoning regulations, and threatened moratoria, on the construction of solar. In every instance, our business model is challenged and projects are sometimes endangered. We also are compelled to fine-tune each project based on local zoning ordinances, which takes time and resources away from building solar to meet Maryland's RPS goals.

When CI is looking to build a new solar project, we have a series of agreements that much be reached before applying for zoning. We negotiate an interconnection with the utility. We negotiate a lease with the landowner. And, unique to CI's model, we often negotiate an off-taker for the energy produced. Uncertainty and arbitrariness in the zoning process convert all of those agreements into at-risk liabilities. We encourage the General Assembly to find ways to minimize these risks whenever possible.

While we understand that sponsor amendments may remove the procurement requirement, we appreciate the original inclusion and encourage the General Assembly to take up more aggressive solar procurement requirements going forward. CI Renewables has executed the largest Power Purchase Agreement in the state in Howard County, but look forward to exceeding that in the years ahead.

We would ask for a FAVORABLE report.

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