



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 685

Program Open Space – Use of Property – Renewable Energy and Storage

Date: February 27, 2024

Position: **Opposed**

To: Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

From: Doug Myers
MD Senior Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **OPPOSES** SB 685 which expands the use of Program Open Space to include acquisition of properties for renewable energy facilities.

While there will be challenges making the energy transition Maryland committed to in the Climate Solutions Now Act and Governor Moore's Maryland Climate Pathway, the transition is expected to be one driven by market forces and private investment. Significant financial incentives already exist and are accompanied by various policies to address solar, wind, and energy storage siting that will protect natural habitats and green spaces. For example, targeting already built areas like rooftops, brownfields, and highway rights of way accomplishes this protection and reduces the amount of energy loss in transmission because generation happens closer to where the energy is needed. Without creating any additional funding source, SB 685 will create competition with existing uses of Program Open Space used to protect critical fish and wildlife habitats, water quality, public access and recreation.

CBF urges the Committee's UNFAVORABLE report on SB 685.

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

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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 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.