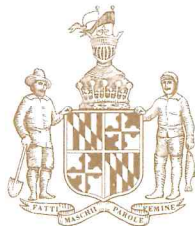


STEPHEN S. HERSHEY, JR.
Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
Queen Anne's Counties

MINORITY WHIP

Finance Committee
Executive Nominations Committee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 420
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3639 · 301-858-3639
800-492-7122 Ext. 3639
Fax 410-841-3762 · 301-858-3762
Steve.Hershey@senate.state.md.us

The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 19, 2020

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Education, Health and Environment Committee
Senate Bill 891 – Environment – Solar Panel Stewardship Program

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 891 establishes a solar stewardship program to be developed and adopted by the Department of Environment (MDE) for manufacturers of solar panels. This program will ensure a plan is in place for a convenient, safe and environmentally sound takeback and recycling program for out-of-service solar panels and their materials. This plan with manufacturers, stewardship organizations and other stakeholders is meant to start the conversation of minimizing the environmental impact of these waste materials.

Currently, Maryland does not have specific requirements for the disposal or recycling of solar panels. Many of the solar panels contain toxic materials that are hard to separate unless recycled. The current practice is to add the solar panels to landfills which adds a risk of potentially leaking toxins into the soil and/or groundwater. Therefore, this bill will help to decrease the amount of solar panels disposed of in our landfills.

Under this program, manufacturers and MDE will work together to develop a sound stewardship plan and operate a solar panel stewardship program in accordance with that plan.

I request the committee's favorable consideration of Senate Bill 891.