



TO: Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
FROM: Mary Beth Tung – Director, MEA
SUBJECT: SB0330 – State-Funded Construction and Major Renovation Projects - Solar Panels - Requirement
DATE: January 21, 2021

MEA POSITION: FAV

The availability of large tracts of open land in rural communities are ideal for utility-scale solar generation development. This has raised concerns about whether the development of multiple, large projects may consume prime farmland that existing State and local policy aims to preserve due to its importance to the state’s agricultural communities, industry, history, and culture.

To examine these renewable energy siting issues, Governor Hogan established the Task Force on Renewable Energy Development and Siting (REDS) by Executive Order 01.01.2019.09. Solar siting was of particular interest because of the large number of proposed utility-scale solar projects in Maryland. Therefore, a focus of the Task Force was to explore other development opportunities such as brownfields, parking facilities, and rooftops, as well as to consider streamlining of state permitting processes to benefit all forms of generation sources.

Senate Bill 330 would be complementary to the already great efforts of the REDS task force. By harnessing the sheer volume of State real estate for the installation of solar photovoltaic, SB 330 could have a meaningful impact in increasing adoption of *intelligently sited* solar in both the near- and long-term.

For these reasons, MEA urges a **favorable report** for Senate Bill 330.