

# **HB76: Community Solar Energy Generating Systems - Exemption From Energy and Property Taxes**

House Ways and Means Committee

January 19, 2022

## **Position: Favorable**

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

As Maryland strives towards clean energy goals, smart solar siting is a critical facet that needs to be addressed. Clean Water Action supports initiatives that remove barriers and incentivize solar siting on impervious surfaces, to increase the state's capacity to develop solar power capacity while minimizing negative externalities on local ecosystems and Maryland's agricultural economy.

Clean Water Action encourages that solar siting be prioritized on impervious and unproductive lands, like rooftops, parking lots, and brownfields. We appreciate how HB76 seeks to make these areas more accessible to solar installation by reducing the cost. Solar on impervious surfaces, like rooftops and parking lots, is a win-win: it produces energy on an area of land while other activities take place in the building below, instead of displacing other uses of that land as happens when solar is built on farmland, forests, or wetlands.

Currently, it is more expensive to develop smaller rooftop and parking lot canopy community solar projects, but by reducing the taxes collected on these projects benefiting low-to-moderate income customers the state can encourage these projects.

We appreciate Delegate Smith introducing this legislation to encourage more distributed, equitable solar generation in the state, especially solar generation on rooftops and parking lots and urge a favorable report.

Thank you,

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