



Senate Bill 783

*Renewable Energy - Net Energy Metering Aggregation, Solar Renewable Energy Credits,
And Taxes on Solar Energy Generating Systems (Brighter Tomorrow Act)*

Position: UNF

Date: February 29, 2024

To: **Education, Energy, and
the Environment,
Budget and Taxation**

The Caroline County Commissioners **OPPOSE** SB 783. This bill seeks to promote renewable energy by reducing carbon emissions. However, we believe that certain provisions of this bill could have negative impacts on our community and hinder our ability to effectively manage our resources. Specifically, we are concerned about the following aspects of the bill:

- **Increasing Maximum Generating Capacity:** The proposed increase in the maximum generating capacity authorized for net metered generating facilities from 2 megawatts to 5 megawatts could lead to larger-scale solar energy projects that may not be suitable for our county's landscape and infrastructure.
- **Exemption from Property Taxes:** The bill proposes exemptions or reductions in property taxes for various types of solar energy generating systems, including ground-mounted systems. This could result in a loss of revenue for our county, impacting essential services and infrastructure development.
- **Prevailing Wage Provisions:** While we support fair wages for workers, the requirement for prevailing wage provisions on solar energy projects could increase construction costs and deter developers from investing in our county, thereby limiting job opportunities and economic growth.
- **Annual Reporting Requirements:** The bill imposes annual reporting requirements on the status of the net metering program and solar energy generating systems, which could create administrative burdens for local governments like ours.
- **Existing Pilot and Land Use Provisions:** It is important to note that Caroline County already has a pilot program and provisions on the amount of land that can be used for solar energy projects. We believe that these existing regulations are sufficient to address the needs of our community without the need for further state intervention.

Overall, we believe that the proposed changes in House Bill 1435 may not be in the best interests of Caroline County and could undermine our ability to make decisions that align with the needs and priorities of our community. The Commissioners respectfully urge your committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 783. By enacting thoughtful legislation that considers the needs of rural communities, we can ensure a sustainable future for Caroline County and the state of Maryland as a whole.

Sincerely,

J. Travis Breeding, President