



Worcester County Government

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March 5, 2024

Delegate Marc Korman
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Marc.Korman@house.state.md.us

Delegate Regina T. Boyce
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
regina.boyce@house.state.md.us

Dear Environment and Transportation Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and members:

The Worcester County Commissioners support HB 1221 Battery Storage and Solar Arrays Safety Training Grant Program and Fund. This needed legislation will make available funds for local governments to provide vital training to area fire departments about the proper responses to and the inherent dangers of Lithium-ion battery storage facilities, which are becoming more prevalent.

Battery Energy Storage Systems can prove fatal due to potential explosions caused by thermal runaway. When this occurs, toxic chemicals are released into the air that are extremely hazardous to first responders and any other people and animals within the plume area. Quality training to address these hazards can be expensive, so the proposed funding will be vital in providing the training needed to protect our first responders. In addition, the runoff that occurs from attempting to extinguish these systems is also littered with toxic chemicals that are detrimental to the environment, and ultimately state waterways.

Because of these hazards, it is imperative that Maryland jurisdictions have the funds needed to equip local fire departments with critical information to safely respond to emergencies involving lithium-ion battery storage systems installed with solar arrays and to establish certain training and emergency response standards that assure public safety as the State of Maryland moves towards a more robust renewable energy portfolio. We thank you for considering our concerns and urge you to support HB 1221.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony W. Bertino, Jr." The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.
President

cc: Senator Mary Beth Carozza
Delegate Wayne Hartman
Delegate Charles Otto