



## **SB049**

### **Restrictions on Use - Solar Collector Systems - Alteration**

#### **Testimony before the Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Hearing February 8, 2024**

**Position: Favorable**

Dear Chair Smith and Co-Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today **in support of SB049**, which would define more clearly what are the prohibited restrictions on land use for installing solar collector systems. We appreciate the leadership of Senator Elfreth in sponsoring this legislation.

You can easily google crazy HOA rules and find many sites with funny stories. However, with the urgent need to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, one area where an HOA should be prevented from prohibiting residents from making alterations to their house, is when they want to install solar collector systems on their roof or siding. Maryland, thankfully, has a law in place that prevents an HOA from imposing a restriction on unreasonable limitations on the installation of solar panels.

However, the original wording of this law was not specific enough by only saying that the limitation could not "significantly increase the cost of the solar collector system or significantly decrease the efficiency of the solar collector system". This bill will fix that by stating what the increases and decreases are. Specifically, the limitation could not increase the cost of the system by 5% or more and could not decrease the efficiency by 10% or more. This will help make it clear for both homeowners and HOAs.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Virginia Smith  
Columbia, MD 21044