



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

House Bill 1061

State-Owned Property - Inventory and Disposition - Housing and Solar Energy Production

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: February 25, 2025

From: Dominic J. Butchko and Charlotte Fleckenstein

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1061. This bill requires the State to assess excess land in its inventory and determine if any of these properties are suitable for affordable housing or solar development.

The 2025 Maryland General Assembly is facing a historic number of complex generational challenges. Two of the most prominent issues are the state's rising costs in both energy and housing. Unlike other challenges with an easy cause-and-effect explanation, both energy and housing are multilayered, where decisions made outside of Maryland can have dramatic impacts. This reality does not mean Maryland is shackled without a means of recourse; instead, it means both state and local policymakers must be nimble in their thinking and approach.

Counties applaud HB 1061 as smart, innovative legislation that seeks to convert wasted surplus into strong assets. This commonsense bill requires the Department of Planning to assess State-owned lands for their suitability for affordable housing or solar energy. This is an innovative, outside-the-box approach which could decrease the maintenance burdens on the State and further solutions toward two of Maryland's most vexing dilemmas.

HB 1061 is a smart approach that seeks clean energy solutions in previously unexplored areas. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to give HB 1061 a **FAVORABLE** report.