



Maryland Energy Administration

TO: Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Appropriations Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: HB0061 - Public School Construction and Renovation - Solar Canopies for School Parking Lots - Underground Infrastructure
DATE: January 28, 2025

MEA Position: Letter of Information

House Bill 61 would require that when a construction project or major renovation project of a public school also includes the construction or renovation of a school's parking lot, that the parking lot must be equipped with underground infrastructure to support future solar canopy installation.

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) supports the sponsor's intent of increasing solar installation to achieve Maryland's clean energy goals and recognizes that our public schools can be an additional driver in achieving those goals. Beyond boosting clean energy, school-based solar projects offer unique opportunities to integrate clean energy into the curriculum. Currently, MEA manages its Decarbonizing Public Schools Program, which supports solar for public schools.

MEA notes that the proposed legislation does not take into account the property location and landscape of individual schools. For properties that have significant shading from trees or nearby structures, solar canopies may not be a viable option. To the extent that individual parking structures are not suitable for solar canopies, the additional costs associated with making them solar-ready, may not be prudent.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this additional information. For questions, please contact Megan Outten at megan.outten@maryland.gov or 443.842.1780.