



January 28, 2025

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Executive Director

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**SUPPORT: HB61 - Public School Construction and Renovation – Solar Canopies for School Parking Lots – Underground Infrastructure**

Chair Barnes and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports HB61 (Public School Construction and Renovation - Solar Canopies for School Parking Lots - Underground Infrastructure) and we thank Delegate Charkoudian for her leadership on this issue.

In 2019, the Maryland General Assembly renewed its commitment to expanding renewable energy by establishing a directive to have 50% of its energy consumption coming from renewable sources by the year 2030. Within this goal is the mandate that 14.5% of that renewable energy would come from solar energy generation. This goal has been embraced by Governor Moore, who has expressed his commitment to expand this goal still further, and reach 100% clean electricity. In order to achieve these goals, the state must take every opportunity to ease the path for solar energy generation, especially where it can have co-benefits to individuals or communities, such as rooftop and parking canopy installations.

HB61 provides an important opportunity for the state to reach its ambitious solar energy generation goals by ensuring that new schools, and those that undergo renovation, will have the underground infrastructure to allow them to install solar canopies over their parking lots. While it does not require the installation of solar projects, this bill will help to reduce the added costs associated with solar parking canopies. Expanding the market for solar parking canopies will also help to ease some of the pressure on open space ground-mount installations by supporting a diversified path to reaching the critical 14.5% solar goal.

HB61 is one of several bills that will be before the General Assembly this year that will advance our renewable energy goals and help us build our clean energy economy. Solar energy is proven to be effective, efficient, and impactful both for the clean energy it creates, as well as for the expanded market for jobs to install and maintain the systems. HB61 if implemented will help the state make progress towards meeting its solar generation goal.

Maryland LCV urges a favorable report on this important bill.