

HB0061_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
01/28/2025

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TESTIMONY ON HB#/0061- POSITION: FAVORABLE

**Public School Construction and Renovation - Solar Canopies for School Parking Lots -
Underground Infrastructure**

TO: Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Appropriations Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0061, Public School Construction and Renovation - Solar Canopies for School Parking Lots - Underground Infrastructure

Last year, contained in the [Brighter Tomorrow Act of 2024](#) signed by Governor Wes Moore, the new Maryland Solar Access program committed Maryland to boost solar development in the state and make it easier for more Marylanders to reduce both their energy bills and carbon footprints. This bill will carry forward that Brighter Tomorrow goal by expanding the use of solar power in our educational institutions, some of which like the University of Maryland and several community colleges have already implemented.

This bill will require that each construction project or major renovation project of a public school building proposed after December 31, 2025, that includes the construction or renovation of a school parking lot be designed, engineered, and constructed in a manner so that the parking lot is equipped with the appropriate underground infrastructure necessary to support solar canopy installation.

This expansion of solar energy usage with solar carports has multiple advantages ¹, including:

- Do not require any additional real estate - you can build the solar canopy atop existing [or renovated] parking spaces
- Offer an alternative to installing on the rooftop, which might not be possible due to structural or design issues
- Improve customer parking experience by offered shade from the sun and protection from the rain
- Provide a visual reminder of a company's [Maryland's] commitment to sustainable, clean energy - more so than out-of-sight solar panels, or simply purchasing green energy from the utility

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0061.

¹ <https://www.solarreviews.com/blog/are-solar-canopies-worth-it>