



Maryland

Energy Administration

TO: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: HB1111: Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems - Floating Systems and Systems Located on Brownfields
DATE: February 20, 2025

MEA Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

House Bill 111 expands incentives for floating solar energy generating systems and solar projects located on brownfields.

This legislation is a critical step toward advancing Maryland's renewable energy goals, maximizing underutilized spaces for clean energy generation, and ensuring that our state remains a leader in the fight against climate change. This bill presents an opportunity to accelerate progress by tapping into underutilized energy sources: floating solar systems and brownfield solar projects.

Floating solar systems, installed on bodies of water such as reservoirs, retention ponds, and wastewater treatment facilities, present a unique opportunity to generate renewable energy without consuming valuable land while reducing water evaporation and improving water quality by limiting algae growth. Brownfields, previously contaminated or underutilized industrial sites, can be repurposed for solar energy, transforming environmental liabilities into assets.

HB 1111 makes it more financially feasible for developers to invest in innovative solar solutions, which will support energy resilience in Maryland. Given Maryland's pressing need to expand clean energy deployment, this bill is a common-sense approach to leveraging available spaces while ensuring a just and equitable transition to a clean energy future.

The Maryland Energy Administration would seek to have an amendment to set guardrails in place to ensure that non-navigable waters would exclude tidal wetlands or other sensitive areas, instead limiting floating solar systems to bodies of water such as reservoirs, retention ponds, and wastewater treatment facilities.

For these reasons, MEA urges the committee to issue a **favorable report as amended**.

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