

February 25, 2025

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland State Senate
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable CT Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
231 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Public Utilities – Generating Stations – Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act) -
Letter of Opposition

Chair Feldman and Chair Wilson,

Please accept this letter as part of the testimony submitted for your public review of the Renewable Energy Certainty Act, as set forth in 2025 Senate Bill 931 and House Bill 1036.

Chair, and members of the committee, my name is Lauren Daffin. First of all, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to share my strong opposition to Senate Bill 931. I am not a farmer, but I come from generations of farmers. I have inherited their incredible work ethic, resilience and respect for agriculture. I am not a farmer, but farming has played a remarkable role in who I am today. Farming also plays a remarkable role in the state of Maryland and our local communities. I am not a farmer, but I'm hoping that makes this testimony even more meaningful. I am now a high school Social Studies teacher. I teach American Government to sophomore students, and today I took off work to lead by example and demonstrate the civic responsibility and engagement that I encourage my own students to embody. In government class, I teach my students that legislators should reflect the values, concerns, and needs of their constituents when making decisions. Your primary duty is to serve the people and act in our best interest. Your primary duty is NOT to pass the greatest land grab in our state's history. Your primary duty is NOT to ensure the permanent destruction of Maryland's farmland. Your primary duty is NOT to act in the best interest of solar developers whose main concern is profit and control. Your main concern should be *preserving* Maryland's largest economic sector, which is farming and agriculture. If our cherished farms are replaced with solar power, this will result in irrevocable damage to Maryland's small-town economies and rural communities. If our cherished farms are replaced with solar power, this will result in irrevocable damage to the lives of farmers throughout our state and people like me—who might not ever get a chance to experience life on a farm if they are replaced with large-scale solar projects.

The Renewable Energy Certainty Act is unacceptable and inexcusable. County zoning laws exist to reflect the needs, priorities, and concerns of local communities. Overriding these laws will irrevocably silence residents' voices regarding farming operations and land-use decisions that directly impact them and the agriculture industry in the state of Maryland as a whole. Local governments carefully plan zoning laws to balance agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial needs. State interference will lead to far-reaching conflicts with existing land use and farming operations. In addition, allowing the state government to override local zoning laws for solar projects could set a precedent for other types of state interference, weakening local governance and decision-making autonomy. While you may think expanding solar energy is essential for sustainability, I emphatically urge you to recognize and consider the significance of opposing this bill. As your constituent, I urge you to take ethical action in your decision making. I urge you to oppose Senate Bill 931. Please carefully consider our public concerns and heartfelt testimony today, and thank you again for this opportunity to share my opposition to Senate Bill 931.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Daffin