



HB1036/SB931- Public Utilities- Generation Stations- Generation and Siting
(Renewable Energy Certainty Act)

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FAVORABLE

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Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment and Economic Matters Committees,

This bill is the most important piece of energy equity legislation this year. The central premise is two-fold. First, this bill ensures the red tape that has prevented the full deployment of solar and battery storage is lifted. It is not fair to say that wealthy, bucolic communities can ban clean energy infrastructure and that overburdened, underserved communities should continue to suffer the harms of polluting fossil fuels because of “not in my backyard” attitudes. This bill rights that wrong.

Secondly, this bill codifies the fact that all communities are equally important by advancing reasonable, community friendly guidelines for the siting of large solar and battery projects. These guidelines include vegetation screenings and setbacks. These are common sense siting practices that all communities deserve.¹

In addition to providing much needed clarity on solar and battery siting, the Renewable Energy Certainty Act supports homeowners’ ability to confidently choose to have solar on their roofs. When someone signs a contract to have solar installed on their homes, they deserve to feel certain their contractor will do good work and keep their word.

Solar² and batteries³ are the fastest and most affordable way to add new energy to the grid. Ensuring these technologies can be deployed at scale is key to meeting Maryland’s projected increases in electricity demand. This bill protects Maryland homeowners and communities, codifies equity in solar and battery deployment, and will support our ability to be energy independent and have lower utility bills.

I urge a favorable report on HB1036/SB931.

¹ <https://www.nlc.org/article/2023/06/09/the-power-of-community-beauty-transforming-small-cities-for-success/>

² <https://www.carbonbrief.org/solar-is-now-cheapest-electricity-in-history-confirms-iea/>

³ <https://www.brattle.com/insights-events/publications/real-reliability-the-value-of-virtual-power/>