

## Board of County Commissioners

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## Carroll County Government

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### **HB 1036/SB 931 – OPPOSE Public Utilities - Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act)**

February 18, 2025

The Honorable C.T. Wilson, Chair  
House Economic Matters Committee  
231 Taylor House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

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

Dear Chairs Feldman, Wilson and Committee Members:

The Carroll County Board of Commissioners (BoC), unanimously oppose **HB 1036/SB 931 – Public Utilities - Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act)** and urge you to reconsider its implications.

The proposed mandate undermines local governance and disrupts the delicate balance between energy demands, property rights, and environmental stewardship. Carroll County has a proud, decades-long tradition of agricultural preservation—carefully protecting the land to support farmers, local businesses, and rural communities. HB 1036/SB931 threatens to dismantle that legacy, stripping away our ability to safeguard farmland and preserve our way of life.

Carroll County is already facing significant challenges with the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP). If the project comes to fruition, MPRP will seize over 476 acres of farmland, 125 acres of forest, and 17 acres of wetlands in Carroll County alone. The MPRP controversy has demonstrated how local concerns are often disregarded in favor of corporate and external interests. HB 1036/SB 931 will further erode the BoC's ability to advocate for residents and protect against similar risks in the future.

Without clear local benefits, BoC cannot afford another policy that shifts financial and environmental burdens to the taxpayers. While recognizing the importance of clean energy, projects must be planned, sited, and regulated with efficiency, transparency, and respect for local communities. The MPRP demonstrates how regional energy initiatives are being forced upon counties with minimal local input and authority. The Renewable Energy Certainty Act will set a dangerous precedent, enabling similar overreach for future energy projects.

Maryland must take a more thoughtful approach to renewable energy, one that does not prioritize industrial-scale solar fields at the expense of agricultural preservation and local economic development. Agriculture is the backbone of Carroll County's economy and top economic driver. Agribusiness

supports jobs, bolsters local businesses, and sustains the tax base. Protecting the agriculture industry has allowed the county to maintain a strong financial standing, including a AAA bond rating. Poorly sited energy projects will jeopardize the industry that sustains Carroll County, threatening livelihoods and weakening the economic foundation for future generations.

For further context, attached is a guest column from the *Baltimore Sun*, which highlights the broader concerns surrounding MPRP—many of which are directly relevant to HB1036/SB931. These are not abstract policy debates; they are urgent, real-world issues impacting our residents, businesses, and environment.

We urge you to **oppose HB 1036/SB 931** and work with jurisdictions to develop solutions that respect local governance, protect communities, and ensure Maryland's energy future benefits all its residents.

We appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CARROLL COUNTY



Kenneth A. Kiler  
President



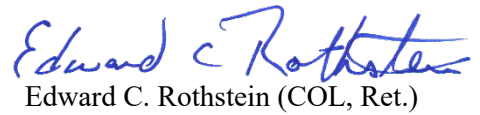
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