

February 28, 2025

Senate Bill 931/House Bill 1036

Public Utilities - Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act)

**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
House Economic Matters Committee**

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **OPPOSES** Senate Bill 931/House Bill 1036 - Public Utilities - Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act) as drafted. During my first term, Anne Arundel County engaged stakeholders across the County to develop and implement Plan2040, the County's General Development Plan. Plan2040 provides a shared, long-range framework for addressing land use issues and sets the policy framework to protect the natural environment, shape development of the built environment, provide public services to promote healthy communities, and support a diverse, resilient economy. It was developed through dozens of public forums and is informed by thousands of comments from the community, as well as coordination from more than 20 County departments, State and Federal agencies, non-profit organizations, and members from the private sector.

Anne Arundel County is Maryland in miniature, and as such has a large rural area with a significant agricultural and agritourism economy. Plan2040 contains many goals and policies to enable our agricultural economy to be sustainable and thrive in a changing economy. It also seeks to protect our natural resources, and protect and restore our sensitive environmental features. At the same time, an important part of protecting our natural resources and sensitive environmental features is transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources. I believe that meeting our energy and environmental goals and protecting our rural and agricultural lands are not mutually exclusive goals. Thoughtful and collaborative planning on both fronts, that takes into account the needs of the community and engages those that are impacted by significant changes to land use policy, is of paramount importance in achieving those goals.

That is why, in Anne Arundel County, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of land in the County that is suitable for solar facilities and other renewable energy sources. The Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, created during my first term, is currently in the process of a thorough and comprehensive analysis of Anne Arundel County's available land, including brownfield sites and built environments, and how to best meet our clean energy goals while adhering to our values as outlined in Plan2040 of protecting and preserving our rural agricultural areas and green space by evaluating the feasibility of solar facilities on all of these sites. This work is still underway, and I strongly believe that it needs to be completed in order for us to move forward with implementing Plan2040 and achieving our clean energy goals. This Bill as introduced would upend that work and negate much of the progress we have made.

Accordingly, Anne Arundel County urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 931 and House Bill 1036 as introduced, and I look forward to continued partnership and collaboration to ensure that our rural and environmentally sensitive areas are protected and preserved, while moving toward a cleaner and greener energy future.



Steuart Pittman
County Executive