



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 61- PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION - SOLAR CANOPIES FOR SCHOOL PARKING LOTS - UNDERGROUND INFRASTRUCTURE

TESTIMONY OF DELEGATE LORIG CHARKOUDIAN

MARCH 20TH, 2025

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Installing solar panels in parking lots has many advantages.¹ They generate clean energy that can be sent directly into the electrical grid or can be used to charge electric vehicles parked below the canopy. Parking lots occupy land that has already been developed and are located near where the electricity is actually being used; decreasing the need to situate solar arrays on undeveloped land and costly transmission or distribution upgrades. The canopies themselves provide shade from the sun and shelter from rain and snow.

House Bill 61 will ensure that the potential benefits and cost savings of parking lot solar canopies are considered during school construction. Current statute requires evaluation of the use of solar technologies—including photovoltaic or solar water heating—during design and development of school construction, but does not specifically require evaluation of the use of parking lot solar canopies. HB 61 will amend Md. Code, Educ. § 5-319 to specifically require evaluation of the use of parking lot solar canopies while new construction is being done on schools (i.e. while the asphalt on parking lots is already ripped up).

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 61.

¹<https://www.wired.com/story/france-solar-panels-parking-lots/#:~:text=The%20biggest%20concern%2C%20though%2C%20is,to%20build%20the%20supporting%20structure.>