

February 17, 2026

Testimony supporting SB 341, Affordable Solar Act
Senate Education, Energy, & the Environment Committee
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of **Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVa)** and the many faith communities we serve across Maryland, we urge a **favorable** report on SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act.

Maryland's faith communities are putting their resources toward sacred and essential purposes. Our congregations strive to be faithful stewards of the gifts entrusted to us.

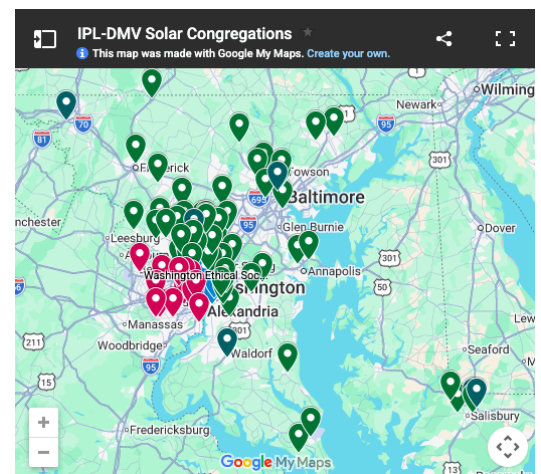
Right now, Maryland families and community institutions face some of the highest electricity costs in the nation, and those costs continue to rise. For congregations, nonprofits, and households alike, this means fewer resources for mission, service, and care, and more money spent on fuel-burning power that harms the very world we are called to protect.

We believe Marylanders deserve real solutions that give us control over our energy future, not just more expensive bills. SB0341 helps build a system that protects ratepayers while moving forward with clean energy. The bill's escrow account system ensures transparency and prevents excessive costs from being passed on to customers, striking an important balance between urgent climate action and strong protections for ratepaying Marylanders.

The Affordable Solar Act also makes solar energy accessible to more of our neighbors, regardless of whether they own their home. The portable solar provisions open the door for renters and apartment residents to participate in the clean energy economy. A typical balcony system can reduce electricity bills by 10–30%, bringing the benefits of energy independence to communities that have long been left out.

Our faith communities know firsthand that solar power works. **Across Maryland, more than 70 congregations are already powering their sanctuaries with the sun.** In just the last year, our Clean Energy Shepherd program helped twelve congregations install or move toward installing solar, representing over a megawatt of clean energy. One church lovingly described their panels as their "newest stained-glass windows," a visible sign of their commitment to stewardship and sustainability.

We are ready to meet the climate crisis with real action. Maryland currently generates only about 7% of its electricity from renewable sources, yet we have set a goal of reaching 50% by 2030. SB0341 moves us meaningfully toward that goal while ensuring the transition is fair, affordable, and inclusive.



For these reasons, and on behalf of the many congregations and communities striving to become better stewards of their resources and their world, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Over seventy congregations across Maryland are already using solar panels to manage their energy costs, including:

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Williamsport
Washington County



St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Salisbury
Wicomico County



Peace Lutheran Church
St. Charles
Charles County



All Saints Lutheran Church
Bowie
Prince George's County



View Interfaith Power & Light's interactive solar congregations map at ipldmv.org/solar