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Education, Energy, and the  
Environment Committee  
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal  
Service Program Workgroup



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 341**  
**Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable**  
**Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)**

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
February 19, 2026

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 341, Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act). The purpose of this bill is to expand solar energy and drive down energy costs for Maryland ratepayers.

Solar energy is the most affordable form of energy and the quickest to deploy. This legislation would reform Maryland’s solar subsidies by creating targeted incentives for different segments of the solar industry, increasing the value to ratepayers and affordably expanding Maryland’s energy supply. This legislation **will not increase costs for ratepayers**.

Maryland enacted the Brighter Tomorrow Act in 2024, a short-term bridge to ensure continued investment in rooftop and community solar, with a commitment to legislate a long-term structural fix within a few years. With the Brighter Tomorrow Act set to expire in 2028 and federal policy changes that harm renewable energy, Maryland must enact new incentives to sustain investment in solar energy, meet growing demand, and stay on track toward its clean energy goals.

**New Subsidies**

SB 341 phases out the current one-size-fits-all solar subsidy program and creates **SREC-II**s. These new subsidies are modeled after New Jersey’s solar incentives and create **targeted support for each segment of the solar industry**, ensuring no segment receives more in incentives than necessary. The bill aims to add 4,000 megawatts of solar energy by 2035 through the following initiatives:

- Directs the PSC to conduct competitive procurement with cost-overrun protections for utility-scale solar, adding 2,000 megawatts by 2035

- Directs the PSC to regularly update incentives for distributed-scale solar (under 5 megawatts), ensuring incentives reflect changing market conditions, technology, and federal policy

### **Escrow Account & Ratepayer Affordability**

SB 341 directs all Alternative Compliance Payments (ACPs) to a new escrow account dedicated to funding solar power. This escrow account will fund SREC-IIs and accept purchases from utilities. An analysis by the Public Service Commission (PSC) determined that this bill **will not increase ratepayer contributions to the RPS** in the coming years. The bill also redirects 75% of franchise and sales taxes from data centers into the escrow account, **ensuring that industries driving demand contribute to cost stabilization.**

### **Fair-Wage Protections**

The bill fixes structural issues with fair-wage protections from previous legislation, ensuring that solar projects **generate good-paying jobs for Marylanders.** Additionally, this legislation requires utility-scale solar projects to adhere to community benefit agreements.

### **Balcony Solar**

SB 341 also authorizes ‘balcony solar,’ small solar units that can be plugged into the wall and offset up to 1,200 watts of electricity usage. These units expand access to affordable solar energy for renters and for households unable to install rooftop systems, helping lower energy bills. When paired with a battery, balcony solar also offers energy resiliency. Balcony solar units are popular in Germany and were recently authorized in Utah.

SB 341 makes clean, affordable solar accessible to all Marylanders, reducing energy costs while advancing the State’s clean energy goals.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report on SB 341.**

With kindest regards,



Benjamin Brooks