



26 February 2026

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

Written Testimony

SB683: Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Stations – Siting (Solar Siting and Preservation Credit Act of 2026)

Position: Unfavorable

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 683, Solar Energy Generating Stations – Siting (Solar Siting and Preservation Credit Act of 2026)

I am Robin Dutta, the Executive Director of the Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association (CHESSA). Our association advocates for our member companies who represent all market segments across the solar and energy storage industries. Many members are Maryland-based. Others are regional and national companies with an interest and/or business footprint in the state. Our purpose is to promote the mainstream adoption of local solar, large-scale solar, and battery storage throughout the electric grid to realize a stable and affordable grid for all consumers. We are the regional affiliate of the national Solar Energy Industries Association.

I am here to provide unfavorable testimony on SB683.

Maryland desperately needs more in-state generation to avoid record high prices coming from the regional grid operator, PJM. Solar is the only new generation coming online in Maryland at scale. The 2025 Renewable Energy Certainty Act brought state policy in line with local solar siting ordinances. As counties update their ordinances accordingly, CHESSA expects increased business certainty with clear rules of the road and requirements that responsible solar developers are more than comfortable adhering to.

This relatively new law was the product of compromise from all sides. It is the right balance of prioritizing land conservation, retaining local authority, and building new solar generation to combat the growing energy affordability crisis. CHESSA appreciates all the work done by the Maryland General Assembly during your 2025 legislative session to work out those differences and come to a compromise that respects all parties. While the solar industry did not convince lawmakers on every issue, this is a law that reflects our realities, addresses our major concerns, and improves the business environment for our companies.

We do not believe that on-site solar projects should count towards the attainment of the 5 percent acreage cap for solar in priority preservation areas because these on-site solar projects



are already on the built environment. This acreage limitation was meant to apply only to groundmount solar projects.

Maryland Needs More Energy

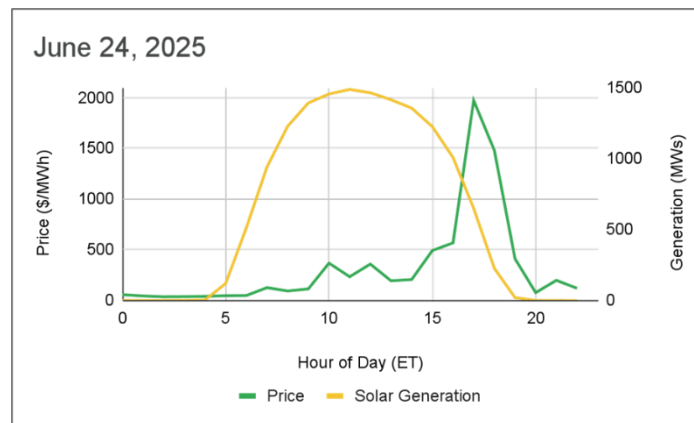
Electric demand is increasing. And there is already straining in its electric system. Maryland only generates about 60 percent of the electric generation it demands¹.

Layering on the problem are the faults within the PJM Interconnection. The 2025/26 PJM forward capacity auction was calculated to increase as much as 24 percent by the Office of People’s Counsel, according to [an August 2024 report](#). The 2027/28 PJM auction cleared at a higher value than the 2025/26 auction, making a bad trend even worse. That auction clearing price (\$333/MW-day) was a record high, despite an auction ceiling price, and the fear was that without the ceiling price, the auction results would have eclipsed \$500/MW-Day. A big reason was the over 6 GW capacity shortfall participating in the auction. Simply put, there is not enough generation relative to the demand for electricity. As of today, there will be no ceiling price in the next capacity auction.

The latest report from the [Maryland Public Service Commission’s 10-Year Plan for Electric Companies](#) shows Maryland’s annual electric demand growth was revised upwards in their 2025 filings versus 2024². That revision nearly doubles Maryland’s anticipated annual load growth.

More Maryland Solar Equals More Maryland Energy Savings

The data shows that distributed solar and storage strategies are scalable and help the electric grid. As Maryland consumers generate and use more distributed solar generation, the utilities do not have to procure as much energy via PJM or from out-of-state for their standard offer service.



Source: PJM BGE Real Time LMP v. PJM Mid Atlantic Solar Generation Profile

¹ <https://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.php?sid=MD>

² Maryland Energy Administration. “Reaching 100 Percent Net Carbon-Free Electricity in Maryland”. January 2025. p.19



The graph titled “June 24, 2025” shows the spike in energy prices and solar generation in Maryland for that day. Solar generation naturally helps to offset demand in peak periods, which occur during the day. The concentration of electricity costs occurs during peak demand periods, and when solar offsets some or all of that demand, it helps to lower prices across the grid. All ratepayers can benefit from avoiding those costs.

Meeting resource adequacy needs and growing electric demand can be an expensive proposition for the ratepayer. Utility-centric solutions are fully funded by the ratepayer. Wholesale energy solutions do not address local resiliency and reliability needs. All-of-the-above solar and storage strategies mean creating incentives that leverage private capital instead of directing ratepayers to foot the entire bill. Maryland has an energy problem that clean energy is ready to solve.

Conclusion

In conclusion, CHESSA believes that the Renewable Energy Certainty Act should not be modified in this way, or during this session. The full effect of the law will be realized when all counties update their solar ordinances to comply with the new law. We believe this was a just compromise that helps solar business in Maryland, and in turn allows the solar industry to pass on more benefits to Maryland.

CHESSA urges an unfavorable report on SB683.

Please reach out with any questions. CHESSA is here to be a resource to the committee.

Sincerely,

Robin K. Dutta

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Executive Director

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