



## Maryland Farm Bureau

3358 Davidsonville Road | Davidsonville, MD 21035  
410-922-3426 | [www.mdfarmbureau.com](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com)

February 26, 2026

**To:** Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

**From:** Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

**RE:** **Support of SB683 Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Stations - Siting (Solar Siting and Preservation Credit Act of 2026)**

On behalf of the over 7,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I submit written testimony in favor of SB683 Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Stations - Siting (Solar Siting and Preservation Credit Act of 2026). This legislation would allow Maryland counties to credit certain solar energy generating stations toward the acreage limits that apply to solar projects located in Priority Preservation Areas. Specifically, SB683 permits counties to count solar installations approved after January 1, 2027, that are located on brownfields, school rooftops or school fields, or other underutilized lands toward the existing cap that limits solar energy generating stations to 5% of total acreage within these areas.

Prime and productive farmland is an irreplaceable resource. Once it is converted to non-agricultural uses, it is effectively lost forever. Maryland farmers continue to face mounting land-use pressures— from residential and commercial development, to transportation needs, to renewable energy infrastructure. Maryland has already lost more than 12,000 acres of farmland in the last five years alone, a trend that threatens long-term food security and increases costs for locally grown products. At the same time, we recognize the state’s urgent need to expand domestic energy production and meet renewable energy goals.

Fortunately, Maryland does not have to choose between clean energy and agricultural preservation. We can achieve both by focusing solar development on land that is already disturbed or developed. Rooftops, parking lots, brownfields, and other underutilized spaces offer significant opportunities for solar generation without sacrificing productive farmland. Encouraging and incentivizing the use of these sites ensures that agricultural land remains available for farming while still supporting the state’s clean energy transition.

SB683 advances this balanced approach by allowing counties to credit alternative siting options toward the 5% cap on solar installations within Priority Preservation Areas. This flexibility encourages smarter solar deployment and helps ensure that Maryland’s farmland remains protected for future generations.

For these reasons, Maryland Farm Bureau respectfully urges a favorable report on SB683.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', written over a horizontal line.

Tyler Hough  
Director of Government Relations

*Please contact Tyler Hough, [though@marylandfb.org](mailto:though@marylandfb.org), with any questions*