IPL-DMV Testimony for SB 341 FAVORABLE (1).pdf
Uploaded by: Andrea Orozco
Position: FAV

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.

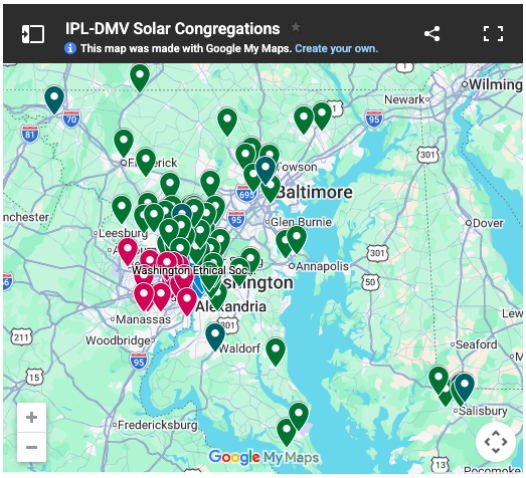
Maryland's faith communities are putting their resources toward sacred and essential purposes. Our congregations strive to be faithful stewards of the gifts entrusted to us.

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**

SB341 Testimony - Andrew Hinz.pdf
Uploaded by: Andrew Hinz
Position: FAV

Testimony Supporting SB341
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 17, 2026

Andrew Hinz
1427 Park Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21217
ahinz61@outlook.com
443-617-4079

Position: SUPPORT

Members of the Committee,

As a lifelong, 65 years, Maryland resident and ratepayer I urge you to pass SB341.

SB341 will make common-sense, well-researched, informed-by-experience adjustments to the Maryland ratepayer-incentivized program to invest in solar energy to better sustain our environment and to avoid escalating and fluctuating electric bills.

With SB341, investments in large solar installations will be made directly through solar project request for proposal, competitive procurements. I led successful IT procurements for the federal government as a technology manager and also for the State of Maryland as a consultant and I know the competitive procurement process works when performed using best practices.

With SB341, investments in medium solar installations will be incentivized by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) using annually adjusted incentive amounts—I have been a citizen working member of the PSC-led Maryland Storage Energy Working Group and I have full confidence PSC staff will be able to tune this incentive effectively year-by-year so businesses will be able to invest confidently and successfully even in a rapidly changing energy 'market.'

With SB341, small solar investments by consumers will not be hindered by public utility bureaucracy but instead will be box purchases at Lowes or Home Depot that work as soon as they are taken out of the box and plugged in. I have a portable solar panel and inverter/battery that I use for camping and other purposes and it is plug and play and it is wonderful.

SB341 will ensure ratepayer investments in solar are used FOR THAT PURPOSE. We ratepayers are very frustrated the solar investments we have been paying for in our electric bills for many years have been significantly diverted from their intended purpose. Establishing good policy but then failing to follow through on its execution erodes confidence and engagement in the process of voting for peers who will legislate the policies we need. And in this case the lack of follow through harmed our environment, raised our electric bills, and exacerbated energy injustices in our state—for example for those in public housing in Baltimore City that could easily be powered by solar and preclude skyrocketing bills; and for those in Stoney Beach suffering from coal plant emissions unnecessarily.

Please un-frustate us by passing SB341—and help ALL Marylanders reap the benefits of the solar boom we see happening in Texas and California. We KNOW solar is the cheapest way to generate electrons

and getting cheaper still—and we are fed up with the slow-walking of the transition of our grid and our electric bills to clean, sustainable, predictably priced energy.

I think I am in a comfortable majority of ratepayers who understand we need to generate more electricity, who would be fine with solar on every rooftop and parking lot in our community, who would be fine with safe batteries installed in our communities like the old telephone switch buildings, and who do not want live anywhere near the alternatives, particularly this one - https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/land-use-biodiversity/wanted-volunteers-host-nuclear-waste-forever-2026-02-06/ (forever nuclear waste).

SB 341_Nature Forward__Fav Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Angie McCarthy
Position: FAV

Testimony for SB 341
Support for the Affordable Solar Act

Bill Sponsors: Brooks, Kramer, and Lam
Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment
Organization Submitting: Nature Forward
Submitted by: Angie McCarthy, MD Conservation Advocate
Position: Favorable

nature forward
Connecting people and nature in the Capital Region
natureforward.org

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and the rest of EEE;

I am submitting testimony on behalf of Nature Forward in strong support of the Affordable Solar Act. Nature Forward (formerly Audubon Naturalist Society) is the oldest independent environmental organization protecting nature in the DC metro region, including Maryland's near counties of Montgomery and Prince George's. Our mission is to inspire residents of Maryland and the Washington, DC region to appreciate, understand, and protect their natural environment through outdoor experiences, education, and advocacy. We thank the Maryland legislators for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Affordable Solar Act (SB 341).

We have heard time and time again that our energy grid does not have enough capacity for our ever-increasing demand. Current renewable energy policies have been driven in large part by fossil fuel interests and have been a hindrance to Maryland's pursuit of previous legislation's clean energy goals. **This is causing regular increases in ratepayers' electrical bills; is delaying our ability to reach our climate goals; and will continue to exacerbate our dual climate and cost of living crises.**

Further, our current structure for incentivizing the clean energy transition is ineffective in accomplishing Maryland's clean energy goals. Very few new clean energy projects are being constructed in the state other than distributed (rooftop) solar projects. The result is that ratepayers are paying more for their electricity, and the funds established for utility infrastructure development are not effectively investing in the development of new clean energy. The Maryland Office of the People's Council has put out a report that ratepayers will see a 2 - 24% rate increase within the next year due to this energy crisis.[1]

[1] https://opc.maryland.gov/Portals/0/Files/Publications/RMR%20Bill%20and%20Rates%20Impact%20Report_2024-08-14%20Final.pdf?ver=V9hZfyTmjLeNVt2Dg3cTgw%3d%3d

The Affordable Solar Act provides many of the solutions that we need to fix our energy landscape. ***The quickest way to build more energy supply is by investing in clean energy projects.*** This is the swiftest way to bring online *new* energy resources while also providing more resilience now and in the future. Additionally, this is how we protect hardworking Marylanders from corporate greed. Building out more natural gas or fossil fuel plants, or business as usual, cannot continue.

The Affordable Solar Act restructures financing and procurement for solar programs – this bill will phase out the current solar subsidy process and replace it with a dynamic process that ensures that solar incentives are tailored for their market segments. This program, which is similar to the New Jersey program that has been operating since 2020, can move our state to producing 15% of energy generation by 2035, while also capping the rate-payer impact of solar.

The Affordable Solar Act will also shift the financial burden off of ratepayers by establishing an escrow account to implement future solar projects. It will democratize renewable energy, by allowing renters, condo-owners, and other multi-family unit dwellers to be part of a renewable energy future through balcony solar. A typical balcony solar unit can reduce energy bills by 10-30% -- a boon when so many are struggling to pay their bills. f[2]

As Nature Forward, we believe the Affordable Solar Act will benefit all Marylanders, on a regular basis. We, and our membership of over 30,000, are proud to support rational, common-sense business and environmental decisions and see the merit in this bill. **For these reasons, we urge a favorable report for the Affordable Solar Act.**

Angie McCarthy
Maryland Conservation Advocate

[2] https://solartechonline.com/blog/solar-panels-apartment-balcony-guide/

SB341_BrooksB.pdf
Uploaded by: Benjamin Brooks
Position: FAV

Benjamin Brooks
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal Service Program Workgroup

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 303
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3606 · 301-858-3606
800-492-7122 *Ext.* 3606
Benjamin.Brooks@senate.state.md.us

District Office
Windsor Mill Office
8419 Liberty Road, Suite B
Windsor Mill, Maryland 21244
410-496-4037

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-IIs.** 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

260219_SB0341 Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Beth Forbes
Position: FAV

2026 Maryland General Assembly

Senate Bill 341 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Committee Hearing 2/19/26

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee Chair Brian Feldman and committee members,

Please favorably pass the Affordable Solar Act out of your committee.

I am especially excited about the plug-in solar opportunities that will be available after this bill passes. Renters are often not able to have solar panels to help provide a portion of their household's electric power. Once "balcony solar" is available in Maryland, renters will be able to access this method of lowering their electric bills.

Sincerely,

Beth Forbes, P.E.

SB0341_FAV_CCANAF.pdf
Uploaded by: Brittany Baker
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY OF
BRITTANY BAKER
MARYLAND DIRECTOR
—
MIKE TIDWELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SB0341- PUBLIC UTILITIES- SOLAR ENERGY GENERATING SYSTEMS AND SOLAR RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDITS (AFFORDABLE SOLAR ACT)

FAVORABLE

FEBRUARY 19TH, 2026

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

The Affordable Solar Act is CCAN Action Fund's number one priority this legislative session. This essential piece of legislation is the permanent fix that Maryland needs to expand the deployment of solar energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state, stabilize the solar industry in the face of federal antagonism, and ensure the solar industry provides family sustaining jobs for Maryland residents. Further, this bill protects ratepayer funds that are collected from the Renewable Portfolio Standard to ensure those investments are used for the Renewable Portfolio Standard.

Solar energy projects provide the cheapest electrons and are the quickest to build projects to add to the grid. According to Lazard (the definitive source for the levelized cost comparison between various energy resources), onshore wind and utility-scale solar are the most cost-effective sources for energy deployment and have been for the last ten years. Adding solar projects to Maryland's energy system has the ability to put downward pressure on [1] rates by increasing the amount of cheap energy produced in the state. The bill takes a targeted approach to support the solar industry by ensuring each segment of the industry is appropriately supported to ensure full deployment.

Along with stabilizing the solar industry, this bill confronts the reality that the Maryland Renewable Portfolio Standard is currently not functioning. Each year since 2021, the amount of alternative compliance payments (ACPs) that have been purchased by the utility companies have been very substantial. When ACPs are purchased [2] instead of investing in new solar, we miss opportunities to transform our energy system and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, a recent report from MDE found that we are behind on our greenhouse gas emissions reductions goals due to this issue that has become chronic.[3]

In order to build a grid that is resilient and maximizes clean energy resources Maryland needs to commit to long-term programs that meet the needs of the clean energy industry and protect ratepayers. This legislation is a targeted and long-term approach that meets the needs of the moment and has been under development for many years as a balanced permanent solution.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB0341.

[1] https://www.lazard.com/news-announcements/lazard-releases-2025-levelized-cost-of-energyplus-report-pr/
[2] https://dls.maryland.gov/pubs/prod/NatRes/IntroductiontotheRenewableEnergyPortfolioStandard.pdf
[3] https://marylandmatters.org/2026/01/30/maryland-emissions-data-behind-goal/

LWVMD - SB 341 - Affordable Solar Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Casey Hunter
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY TO: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

SB 341 - Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

POSITION: Support

BY: Linda T. Kohn, President

DATE: February 19, 2026

The League of Women Voters of Maryland supports policies that protect our environment and promote affordable, clean energy. The League believes that accelerating the transition to renewable energy is essential to lowering long-term energy costs, reducing climate pollution, and protecting public health across Maryland.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland **supports SB 341**, the Affordable Solar Act, which would ensure that ratepayer funds collected for solar energy are used to support new solar development. SB 341 updates the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard and the Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program to reflect the different types of solar energy projects operating in Maryland. This bill also establishes clear solar energy procurement requirements for electric companies, and directs Alternative Compliance Payments (ACP) into a dedicated fund that will support solar energy generation.

Many Maryland households are struggling with rising energy costs, making it especially critical for the state to enact renewable energy policies that help lower and stabilize utility bills. By strengthening Maryland's solar framework and ensuring that compliance payments are used for their intended purpose, **SB 341** supports accountability within the state's clean energy program. When utilities do not meet solar requirements, the resulting ACPs should directly support additional solar generation, rather than being diverted to cover other state expenditures or budget shortfalls.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland and its 2,000 members strongly **urge a favorable report on SB 341.**

121 Cathedral Street, Suite 2B, Annapolis, MD 21401
410-269-0232 * info@lwvmd.org * www.lwvmd.org

SB0341_Affordable_Solar_Act_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341
Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition
Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0341 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members are all hating their utility bills these days. Marylanders have been taken to the cleaners by the very entities that were supposed to manage the grid and ensure that they made good investments that would not spike utility rates and line the pockets of the utilities. Given the complete failure of the PSC to invest in solar and other clean energy sources, we now need to take matters into our own hands.

This bill, if enacted, would phase out the current solar subsidy program and replace it with a new program that would require the Public Service Commission (PSC) to conduct competitive procurements for utility scale solar and ensure that the new systems are built with the best value for rate-payers. It will also require the PSC to establish incentive prices for rooftop and community solar. All of this will be achieved without costing additional increases for rate payers because the Alternative Compliance Payments that have already been paid by rate payers will be put into an escrow account used to implement this new solar model.

Also, this bill would incentivize portable solar - compact portable systems that plug directly into a standard outlet and require no rooftop installation. Portable solar systems feed power into the home to offset consumption, reducing household electricity bills and, when paired with a battery, offer energy resilience to households. This would help many Marylanders who cannot invest in traditional rooftop solar, particularly renters, lower-income households, and homeowners with shaded or otherwise unsuitable roofs. It would put new, clean energy into the grid and into people's homes.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

CCSA testimony_SB 341_2-19-2026.pdf
Uploaded by: Charlie Coggeshall
Position: FAV

1380 Monroe Street NW, #721
Washington, DC 20010
720.334.8045
info@communitysolaraccess.org
www.communitysolaraccess.org

RE: SB 341 – Affordable Solar Act

Favorable

Chair Feldman and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Coalition for Community Solar Access (CCSA) provides this written testimony regarding Senate Bill (SB) 341. CCSA's position on this legislation is Favorable.

CCSA is a national, business-led trade organization, composed of over 100 member companies, that works to expand access to clean, local, affordable energy nationwide through the development of robust community solar programs. Community solar projects involve medium-scale solar facilities that are shared by multiple community subscribers who receive credit on their electricity bills for their share of the power produced.

CCSA has been an active participant in the development and implementation of Maryland's community solar program, from its pilot stages to the permanent program it is today. We appreciate the General Assembly's support and leadership throughout the program's evolution and its embracement of community solar as an energy and affordability solution for the state. Community solar represents one of Maryland's most deployable energy sources and is a versatile tool for reducing electricity costs: particularly for low-and-moderate income customers, which make up at least 40% of the enrolled capacity for each permanent program project.

Senator Brooks SB 341 would help support the sustained growth of community solar and other solar market segments in Maryland, while providing regulatory flexibility to adjust to variables outside the control of the state's policy makers. It would also address shortcomings associated with Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and evolve its current incentive structure from a one-size-fits-all approach to a more sophisticated and cost-effective program design. For community solar and other distributed solar technologies, SB 341 would establish "Administrative Determined Incentive" (ADI) levels that are set and updated by the Public Service Commission and account for the specific needs of each segment. CCSA and its members have direct experience with this program design in neighboring New Jersey and can attest to its success in that state.

CCSA appreciates Senator Brooks dedication to solving the complex challenges associated with Maryland's energy needs and we endorse the direction taken in SB 341. We look forward to continuing to work with the Senator and this Committee to ensure a smooth transition for the solar market.

CCSA urges a favorable report on SB 341.

Sincerely,

Charlie Coggeshall
Mid-Atlantic Director, CCSA
charlie@communitysolaraccess.org

SB0341 testimony .pdf
Uploaded by: Chris Somers
Position: FAV

Hello

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0341.

My electric bill has increased by 17% this year. Electric bills will continue to rise because of increased demand and because of the need to upgrade our grid like transmission lines. Maryland should prioritize rooftop solar. This will give Marylanders a choice for affordable energy. Maryland only gets 2% oh it's energy from renewable. We should prioritize rooftop solar on government buildings as well like schools, libraries and offices. It will SAVE money. Solar panels last 30 years and pay for themselves in less than 10 years. Plus it will create local jobs.

I support this bill and increasing solar energy in Maryland.

Third Act MD favorable testimony on Senate Bill 03
Uploaded by: Christine Pendzich
Position: FAV

SB0341-Support
Third Act Maryland
maryland@thirdact.com
301-928-1624

SB0341

Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits

(Affordable Solar Act)

Education Energy and Transportation

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

My name is Christine Pendzich. I live in Maryland legislative district 20. I am a co-leader for Third Act Maryland; Third Act is a national climate organization for seniors. I am writing on behalf of Third Act Maryland in support of SB 0341.

Third Act has been proud to have Maryland be in the forefront on climate actions, such as joining RGGI and passing the Climate Now Solutions Act in 2022. Third Act has supported action on climate alongside other climate groups and our state legislators. In 2025 the MD Dept of the Environment presented a plan that covered 25 agencies and outlined more than 100 priority actions to lower emissions; the implementation of these would go a long way to meeting the goals set in 2022.

However the execution of many of these initiatives partially relies on federal grants, which have been dramatically reduced under the Trump presidency. The big bad ugly law has eliminated federal tax credits for rooftop solar for residential customers and others. The US Environmental Protection Agency has declared that greenhouse gases are not a threat to our health and the environment, and the Defense Department is required to purchase electricity from coal fired generators. These changes in federal policy make it imperative that Maryland establish a state system to encourage investment in solar facilities and that is exactly what the **Affordable Solar Act** will do.

First, the Affordable Solar Act provides a path for individuals and households living in apartments to invest in solar through the balcony solar initiative. Under this section of the Act, apartment dwellers will be able to hang solar panels from their balconies without interference from utilities as long as they meet Underwriters Laboratory

standards. (These panels can also be stationed in yards, driveways and other locations with sun and access to a plug.)

Second, the Affordable Solar Act requires that 2,000 MW of industrial scale solar be constructed in Maryland. Industrial scale solar is the fastest and cheapest way to generate electricity, much cheaper than natural gas or nuclear facilities. [1] Industrial scale solar can be in place before 2030 while natural gas and nuclear facilities cannot begin to generate electricity until many years into the future. There is no longer any real question that industrial scale solar facilities combined with batteries are just as reliable as natural gas facilities.[2] Because industrial scale solar with batteries is reliable, investment in these facilities will increase the supply of reliable capacity and therefore reduce the price of capacity in the PJM capacity market.

Third, the Affordable Solar Act requires that an additional 2,000 MW of distributed solar be constructed in Maryland. Most of this investment will be "behind the meter" solar on residential homes and commercial buildings. Behind the meter solar reduces Maryland's dependence on the PJM grid and protects Maryland consumers from the impacts of large data centers on electricity rates. Furthermore, because PJM allocates capacity and transmission costs on the basis of relative peak demand, behind the meter solar, by reducing Maryland's peak demand, will reduce the amount of revenue flowing from Maryland consumers to PJM vested interests. PJM's voting membership and its board are dominated by utilities; we can't rely on PJM to solve the problem of rising electric costs in Maryland.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Thank you for your consideration.

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[1] lazards-lcoeplus-june-2025.pdf

[2] PJM. "December 2023 Effective Load Carrying Capability (ELCC) Report. Available at: elcc-report-december-2023.ashx.

SB0341 Favorable Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Cynthia Miller
Position: FAV

HB0345 - SUPPORT

Cynthia Miller
Third Act Maryland
cyngmiller@gmail.com
301-785-0369

SB0341
Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

February 17th, 2026

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members,

On behalf of Third Act, a group of 1400 elders committed to clean energy, climate justice and democracy, I urge a favorable report on SB0341, Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act). We at Third Act believe SB0341establishes the foundation Marylanders need to join the clean, affordable, and urgent energy transition our times demand.

We are confident through the work of our organization's climate activists throughout the state, that Marylanders are clamoring for clean, renewable, and affordable energy options. As a life-long Maryland resident, I can attest to the challenges that face all Marylanders, if we don't act urgently to promote and support clean energy solutions throughout our state.

Family budgets are straining to keep up with skyrocketing costs for electricity (among the nation's highest). We continue to hear from Maryland families about the strain to our pocketbooks, and to our environment, that our continued reliance on fossil fuels have caused. Marylanders are ready now for a change to a clean energy future.

We believe strongly that energy independence should be accessible to all Marylanders, whether homeowner or renter. SB0341 makes solar energy accessible to residents, whether they own a home or not. The bill's portable solar provisions allow renters to finally participate in the clean energy economy, and achieve significant savings on their monthly electric bills.

We also need a system that protects ratepayers while moving forward with clean energy. SB0341 creates an escrow account system that ensures transparency and prevents utilities from passing excessive costs to customers. This approach balances our urgent need for clean energy with strong protections for our families and businesses.

SB0341 moves us towards our collective goals for clean energy, ratepayer affordability and protection for our environment. For these reasons, we strongly support this bill and urge a favorable report on SB0341 in committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cynthia Miller
Third Act Maryland
Co-Facilitator

Testimony on Affordable Solar Act SB341 DAC.pdf
Uploaded by: Debbie Cohn
Position: FAV

Testimony on: SB341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment
Submitting: Deborah A. Cohn
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members:

I have lived in Bethesda for over 40 years and have adult children and pre-school aged grandchildren who also live in Maryland. I am acutely aware of the difficulty many of their peers face in making ends meet, in part due to dramatic increases in utility bills. I also am concerned about the need for Maryland to provide our businesses a competitive advantage and to grow our economy so that we can address our structural budget constraints. I am submitting testimony in support of SB341, the Affordable Solar Act, because it addresses both of these concerns creatively and effectively and ensures that fees that ratepayers are required to pay are used only for their intended purpose. That's just a matter of simple fairness. And so I urge you to vote favorably on SB341.

Maryland is facing an affordability crisis for residents, governments and businesses, as utility bills continue to rise at a greater rate than inflation. Utility scale solar energy and onshore wind remain the least expensive source of new electricity generation. With the Trump administration removing support for these clean, least expensive and fastest to deploy energy sources, states need creative, cost-effective ways to take advantage of these resources.

But Maryland's current system to encourage development of in-state solar energy (whether rooftop, community, commercial or utility scale solar) and cleaner electricity supplies, the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), is broken. It is currently less expensive for utilities to meet the state's solar renewable energy certificate (SREC) requirements by paying the alternative compliance payment (ACP) into the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) than to purchase SRECs. The Brighter Tomorrow Act was a bridge intended to deal with this problem. The Affordable Solar Act provides a long term solution to a broken RPS.

SB341 makes it easier and more cost-effective for residents and businesses in the state to utilize solar energy to reduce their utility bills. It incentivizes new commercial and utility-scale generation to increase reliability, lower the wholesale cost of electricity in the region, and delay the need for expensive new transmission capacity in Maryland. And it redirects existing SREC funds into a new fund to be used to fund in-state solar energy projects.

The Affordable Solar Act achieves this in three ways. The bill takes into account structures developed by New Jersey and other states to make their RPS more effective. SB341 restructures the RPS by directing the Public Service Commission (PSC) to create administratively determined incentive levels for SRECs. Incentives will be tailored according to market segments such as residential, non-residential, and community solar, ensuring that only the amount of incentive needed to induce additional supply in a particular market segment is provided. For utility-scale projects it directs the PSC to conduct a competitive procurement, effectively a reverse auction that will drive down the cost of the targeted amount of new supply to create value for the ratepayer. These efforts will spur 4,000 MW of new, in-state solar energy generation, reducing our dependence on out-of-state, often fossil-fuel energy supplies, while creating good paying Maryland-based jobs.

Second, SB341 creates a clean energy fund administered by the major utilities, and directs into this fund historical ACPs paid into the Strategic Energy Investment Fund. The new fund can only be used to build new, cost effective, in-state clean energy generation. In this way, funds that are paid by ratepayers to generate renewable energy investment can be used only to generate new renewable energy resources. Targeted fees that ratepayers are required under state law to pay through their utility bills should be used only for their intended purposes. That's just simple fairness.

Finally, SB341 allows for Portable Solar Energy Systems, allowing low and moderate income renters and condo residents to acquire easy-to-install solar energy systems without the need to obtain permits or interconnection agreements. These systems are widely used in Europe, UL listed for safety, likely to be available at big box stores and can be plugged into a standard 120v outlet with minimal safety protections. They provide limited amounts of power but give renters, condo owners and those who cannot afford rooftop solar some control over their utility bills at affordable prices.

The Energy Information Administration has just released a new report, forecasting that solar, wind and battery storage will provide over 99% of new electricity generating capacity in the U.S. in 2026. The reason is simple: clean energy generation is the cheapest form of new generating capacity. Residents and businesses in states that pivot away from fossil fuels and other expensive forms of generation will reap the benefits of long term lower electricity costs.

To grow our economy, allow our businesses to compete nationally and internationally, and reduce utility costs for residents, I urge a favorable report on SB341, the Affordable Solar Act.

Testimony in support of SB0341.pdf
Uploaded by: Debra Prybyla
Position: FAV

February 17, 2026
From: Debra Prybyla,
7016 Sycamore Ave.,
Takoma Park, MD 20912

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB0341
Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Position: FAVORABLE

I strongly support SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act. For my children and all future generations, I am greatly concerned about the state of our planet and the impacts of climate change. Using clean, free solar energy is a wise society's solution to solving climate change. The rapid increase in use of solar energy gives me hope, however, in Maryland the way the system is working needs some tweaks.

In particular, this bill will fight back against the federal administration's attempts to destabilize the market, which will cause utility bills to rise in Maryland and across the country. The Affordable Solar Act reforms Maryland's Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program to ensure each solar project gets the exact incentive it needs to ensure construction.

It also authorizes plug-in, portable solar, as well as ensures ratepayer money designated for solar is used for solar instead of non-clean-energy uses such as balancing budget deficits. My house in Takoma Park doesn't get enough sun to make large rooftop panels make sense, but a smaller, plug-in system might work for me, as it might work for people who rent homes and apartments. I am excited about this possibility and about the other improvements that would be made possible by this legislation.

Testimony ASA Support - Senate.pdf
Uploaded by: Diane DeFries
Position: FAV

Testimony from:
Diane DeFries
District 17
505 S Horners Lane
Rockville, MD 20850

Testimony for:
SB0341 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Education, Energy, and the Environment

February 17, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee,

As a concerned citizen, elder, and consistent voter, I urge a favorable report on SB0341, Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act). I believe SB0341 establishes the foundation Marylanders need to join the clean, affordable, and urgent energy transition our times demand. The urgency is to address both the climate crisis and affordability.

This is the time for Maryland to lead on clean energy without further delay. Already facing some of the highest electricity costs in the country with the promise of additional increases, Maryland families deserve real solutions that makes sense for the citizens first and do not pander to special fossil fuel interests. Renewable energy is the most efficient and logical long-term solution. One among many sources documenting the value of renewables, in Here Comes the Sun, Bill McKibben makes the case for the affordability of solar and also shows that the United States is shockingly behind many other countries in utilizing the science and available technology. Maryland should be a leader towards the inevitable future of safe, affordable energy.

SB0341 makes solar energy accessible to everyone, whether they own a house or not. As a homeowner, I have had rooftop solar on my house for five years. The solar generation covers about 70% of all my electric consumption. My monthly bill is often under $9.00. SB0341 makes solar energy accessible to everyone. The portable solar provisions open the door for renters to finally participate in the clean energy economy, typically reducing apartment electricity bills by 10-30%. This bill breaks down barriers of home ownership that have kept solar access out of reach for many.

If we are to meet the goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030, now is the time to act. SB0341 moves us towards that goal. For the reasons stated above, I urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Thank you.

CLPP SB341 testimony FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Donald M. Goldberg
Position: FAV

Climate Law & Policy Project

3405 Shepherd St. Chevy Chase, MD 20815
202-390-3050
www.clpproject.org
Contact: donald@clpproject.org

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment
Testimony on: SB0341 Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Submitted by: Donald M. Goldberg, Executive Director
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Climate Law & Policy Project (CLPP) is a Maryland-based nonprofit research organization that works to develop and promote sound and safe policies to slow, stop, and ultimately reverse the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and ensure that vulnerable communities are protected from climate impacts that cannot be avoided. CLPP supports SB0341.

SB0341 would facilitate the use of "balcony solar" — simple, portable, small-scale solar that can be plugged directly into a regular outlet to offset some electricity consumption. Such solar technologies can be an easy and effective way to deploy more clean energy around the state and to help reduce consumers' electricity bills. Experience elsewhere has shown that the bill savings can be substantial. So far, these solar technologies are much more common in parts of Europe than in the United States, but they are rapidly gaining traction here as well. Utah passed legislation allowing them last year, and several other states are exploring it. Maryland should absolutely clear the way for increased use of this kind of easy, convenient, portable solar.

More broadly, SB0341 would advance deployment of all kinds of solar in Maryland, both distributed and utility-scale. Since solar power is a vital component of Maryland's ability to meet its climate targets, CLPP supports these efforts.

Climate Law & Policy Project urges a favorable vote on SB0341.

SB341_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Donna Edwards
Position: FAV

MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO
Affiliated with the National AFL-CIO

Donna S. Edwards
President

Samuel Epps, IV
Secretary-Treasurer

410.280.2233
410.280.2956
7 School Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-2096

SB 341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 19, 2026

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 341. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

SB 341 recognizes that Maryland's clean-energy future must be built by Maryland workers and embeds it directly into the structure of our state's solar expansion. By grounding solar expansion to responsible development standards, we ensure the clean-energy transition delivers high-quality, local jobs.

This legislation does more than just expand solar capacity, it supports skilled labor and keeps jobs in Maryland. By setting clear procurement requirements and creating a structured pathway for new distributed and utility-scale projects, SB 341 translates solar expansion into real jobs for the trades that build and maintain these systems. It aligns Maryland's goals with a workforce strategy that values training, safety, and fair wages.

SB 341 ensures that public investment in solar energy delivers good jobs, strong communities, and a clean-energy economy that uplifts workers rather than undercuts them.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB 341.

WDC testimony 2026 - SB0341 Affordable Solar Act.d
Uploaded by: Elisabeth Fidler
Position: FAV

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB
P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827 www.womensdemocraticclub.org

House Bill SB0341 Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee – February 19th, 2026
SUPPORT

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club** (WDC) for the 2026 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of **SB0341 - Affordable Solar Act**. This bill will establish the foundation all Marylanders need to join the clean, affordable, and urgent energy transition our times demand.

Solar energy is the fastest and most cost effective way to build new electricity generation. Solar energy has the ability to lower utility bills, stabilize costs, and provide clean energy for a decarbonized future.

This bill SB0341 makes solar energy accessible to everyone whether they rent or own their home. Traditional rooftop solar is unavailable to many Marylanders, particularly renters, lower-income households, and homeowners with shaded or otherwise unsuitable roofs.

Balcony/portable solar projects make solar more widely available to low income Marylanders and renters. A typical balcony system can reduce apartment electricity bills by 10-30%.[1] The portable solar provisions open the door for renters to finally participate in the clean energy economy. We believe energy independence should be available to all Marylanders, not just those who own homes, and this bill breaks down such barriers that have kept solar access out of reach.

We ask for your support for SB0341 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cynthia Rubenstein
WDC President

Elisabeth Liisi Fidler
WDC Subcommittee on Environment and Energy

Kate Stein
WDC Advocacy Chair

[1] Solar Tech Online, "Solar Panels For Apartment Balconies: Complete 2025 Installation Guide," (August 2025) https://solartechonline.com/blog/solar-panels-apartment-balcony-guide/

SB341.EEE.Affordable Solar Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Elizabeth Singer
Position: FAV

Committee:	**Education, Energy and the Environment**
Testimony:	**SB 341 Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits** **(Affordable Solar Act)**
Organization:	**Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County, MD**
Submitting	**Laura Salganik, Chair**
Position:	**FAVORABLE**
Hearing Date:	**February 19, 2026**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

The Jewish Community Relations Council is submitting this testimony in favor of SB 341, the Affordable Solar Act. This bill advances the Jewish values of helping our over-burdened neighbors and repairing the world. Advancing the use of solar power lowers the cost and increases accessibility of clean, renewable energy to individual homes.

This bill phases out the current subsidy program, Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SREC) and replaces it with (SREC 2), an improvement that will see the Public Service Commission (PSC) conducting competitive procurements for utility scale solar to ensure that these systems are built with the best value for rate-payers. Second, the PSC will establish incentive prices for rooftop and community solar and recalculate these regularly, based on changes in the market and federal policy. This model also shifts funds already being paid by ratepayers through Alternative Compliance Payments into an escrow account that will be used to implement SREC 2.

Another real benefit of this bill is that it enables a safe and affordable solution to building more solar: portable, or balcony solar. Compact portable systems plug directly into a standard outlet and require no rooftop installation. Portable solar systems feed power into the home to offset consumption, reduce household electricity bills, and even mitigate climate warming emissions when paired with a battery. Balcony or portable solar appliances make solar more widely available to low-income Marylanders and to renters.

We urge you to support SB 341 to help ratepayers lower the cost and increase the access to clean, renewable energy, so important to the future of the state of Maryland.

We respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 341.

MAREC Action Testimony SB341 FAV 021726.pdf
Uploaded by: Evan Vaughan
Position: FAV

February 19, 2026

MAREC ACTION TESTIMONY SB 341: FAVORABLE

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

MAREC Action (informally, "Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition") writes in support of SB0341, Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act), which seeks to modernize Maryland's solar incentive structure by transitioning to a competitive procurement model. MAREC Action is a Maryland-based coalition of over 50 utility-scale solar, wind, and battery storage developers and manufacturers dedicated to the growth and development of renewable energy across the PJM grid region.

SB341 will help overcome existing barriers to solar deployment in Maryland while simultaneously protecting ratepayers from unnecessary costs. MAREC Action urges the Committee's support.

We know energy affordability is a key concern for Marylanders. A regional imbalance electricity supply and demand is driving up the wholesale cost of electricity. As a result, the best way to stabilize rising wholesale energy prices is to add zero fuel cost resources like solar and wind to the grid. These inexpensive resources bring down the overall cost of energy because they have no variable cost and save fuel supplies for when they are needed most.

Even though utility-scale solar is the least expensive form of new generation[1], Maryland needs to implement incentive reform for the state to stay competitive for utility-scale solar investment. With federal tax incentive availability ending in July 2026, solar project economics will become tighter, and developers will seek only the most competitive project locations. Without solar incentive reform this year, it is very possible that Maryland will face a "valley of death" for utility-scale solar in the late 2020s, where newly limited investment dollars flow to other states.

Building a new power plant (solar or otherwise) is comparatively expensive in Maryland, due to a lack of transmission infrastructure, high land prices, and existing incentive levels that are lower than neighboring states. These challenges are not unique to solar, and we anticipate that any new power plant (including new natural gas) will need incentives to build. Utility-scale solar's low cost, relative to other sources, enhances the value and timeliness of market reforms proposed in SB341.

[1] https://www.lazard.com/media/5tlbhyla/lazards-lcoeplus-june-2025-_vf.pdf

Maryland solar projects are currently incentivized by the state's renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Under the RPS, electricity suppliers are required to purchase Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) relative to the amount of electricity they sell annually, otherwise they must pay an Alternative Compliance Payment (ACP) which serves as a cap on the market. There is a specific carve-out for RECs generated from solar projects within Maryland (SRECs). Maryland's SREC market has driven less investment than it otherwise would because the ACP value is consistently below the regional market valuation of RECs. The entire PJM grid region has a shortage of RECs relative to demand, causing project developers to prioritize development in other states where costs are lower and incentives are higher. The lack of REC supply has driven up prices to the point that it is more economical for electricity suppliers to pay the ACP's than to procure RECs. Paying ACPs does nothing to incentive solar development in the state or stabilize electricity prices.

SB341's "SREC II" framework addresses these issues by differentiating incentives based on solar project type, recognizing that distributed solar and utility-scale solar have different cost structures and development challenges. Crucially, the bill mandates competitive solicitations by the Public Service Commission (PSC) from 2028 to 2035 to procure up to 4,000 MW of solar energy—split evenly between distributed and utility-scale projects.

This procurement model helps new generation overcome deployment challenges while ensuring that incentives are set at the right level to minimize ratepayer costs. Developers are incentivized through competition to submit bids at the lowest feasible incentive levels in order to be selected by the PSC. This approach ensures that ratepayers are not over-paying for projects (or paying for ACPs) and developers are incentivized to pursue innovative siting, design, and cost-reduction strategies.

SB341 directs future ACP payments into a dedicated fund—with the sole purpose of getting new cost-effective solar projects built in Maryland. By reinvesting ACP dollars into deploying more in-state solar energy, SB341's incentive program can be implemented without additional cost to ratepayers. Over time, the increased investment in Maryland solar will reduce wholesale electricity prices.

We thank the Committee for your close consideration and ask that you take a favorable position on this legislation.

Best regards,

Evan Vaughan
Executive Director
MAREC Action
PO Box 3335
Silver Spring, MD 20918

ECA testimony SB0341 Affordable Solar.pdf
Uploaded by: Frances Stewart
Position: FAV

SB0341 - SUPPORT
Frances Stewart, MD
Elders Climate Action Maryland
frances.stewart6@gmail.com
301-718-0446

SB0341 – Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Meeting of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on SB0341, The Affordable Solar Act.

Elders Climate Action is a nationwide organization devoted to ensuring that our children, grandchildren, and future generations have a world in which they can thrive. The Maryland Chapter has members across the state.

Each day, we see the climate crisis more clearly. We know that Maryland is at risk for sea level rise, flooding from intense rainfall, heat waves, and other extreme weather events. Maryland can also be a leader in moving us to a safer, cleaner future where we all can thrive. The clean energy transition is an essential part of that future.

We are also acutely aware of the affordability challenges many Maryland households face. Rising utility bills are a large part of that problem. For those of us on fixed incomes, including many of our members, this is a growing concern.

SB0341 will accelerate Maryland's clean energy transition and address the affordability crisis by making it easier and more cost-effective for residents to use solar energy to reduce their electricity bills and for solar developers to bring new

systems online, thereby increasing reliability, lowering costs, and making our grid cleaner.

Our current Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) system is not sufficient to foster the solar development we need. This bill replaces SRECs with an SREC-II system, modeled on the successful program in New Jersey. It also establishes an escrow account for the proceeds, ensuring transparency and preventing utilities from passing on excessive costs to ratepayers.

We are especially excited about the portable solar ("balcony solar") provisions that would make solar energy accessible to many more people, including renters and homeowners whose roofs are not suitable for solar. Balcony solar has been amazingly successful in Europe and has been successfully brought to the United States by bipartisan legislation in Utah[1].

This bill is essential for moving Maryland from our current 7% to our goal of 50% by 2030. We strongly urge a **favorable** report on SB0341. Thank you for your time and consideration.

[1] A. new Utah bill allows portable solar power systems of up to 1 2 kWac to connect directly to 120V outlets without interconnection applications or utility fees et al., "Balcony Solar Gains Unanimous Bipartisan Support in Utah," *Pv Magazine USA*, March 5, 2025, https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2025/03/05/balcony-solar-gains-unanimous-bipartisan-support-in-utah/.

SB 341 - MoCo DEP - Howard (GA 26) FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Garrett Fitzgerald
Position: FAV

Montgomery County
Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550 **ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270**

SB 341 **DATE: February 19, 2026**

SPONSOR: Senator Brooks

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Bryan Howard (bryan.howard@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support (Department of Environmental Protection)

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

This bill authorizes the use of portable solar energy generating systems and allocates a portion of alternative compliance fees associated with Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard to be used by the Public Service Commission (PSC) to support new solar projects in Maryland.

Utility bills in Maryland continue to rise and have real impacts on families across the state. For example, the Maryland Office of People's Counsel reports that the recent PJM capacity auction will add an additional $2.50 monthly increase for residential customers in the Pepco service territory, on top of an approximately $14 monthly increase resulting from the last capacity auction. These increases strain the budgets of County residents and are not sustainable. Additional power generation is needed to help control these costs, but recent federal actions have eliminated clean energy tax credits, undercutting Maryland's solar industry.

The Affordable Solar Act provides innovative solutions to get more solar on the grid to help address electricity demands and reduce energy bills. The bill empowers residential customers to use portable solar systems if the equipment meets relevant safety standards and limits energy into the electrical system. Other states already allow portable solar under similar conditions and research suggests that systems like those allowed in the bill would not negatively impact the electrical distribution system.

The bill also creates a process managed by the PSC to catalyze new renewable energy projects through an auction-style approach that would deploy incentives in a cost-efficient manner focused on in-state projects. The County supports using alternative compliance fees for the intended purpose of funding renewable energy projects. Direct funding to expand solar generation will help meet State climate goals and growing demands for electricity.

We respectfully request that the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 341.

SB341 SEIA Testimony 2026Feb17.pdf
Uploaded by: Georgina Arreola-Lennox
Position: FAV

February 17, 2026

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

Senator Cheryl C. Kagan
Vice Chair
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SEIA Support for SB341: Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

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

I am writing on behalf of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) in **support** of SB341 (Brooks, Kramer and Lam), also known as the Affordable Solar Act. It was referred to the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee on January 23, 2026.

Founded in 1974, SEIA is the national trade association for the solar and storage industries, building a comprehensive vision for the advancement of these technologies. As the voice of the industry, SEIA works to support solar and energy storage as they become a mainstream and significant energy source by expanding markets, reducing costs, increasing reliability, removing market barriers, and providing education on the benefits and capabilities of solar and energy storage technologies. We work with our 1,200+ member companies, which include solar and storage manufacturers, service providers, residential, community and utility-scale solar developers, installers, construction firms, and investment firms, as well as other strategic partners, to shape fair market rules that promote competition and the growth of reliable, low-cost energy storage and solar power.

Maryland Energy Landscape

After a history of flat, or even declining, electricity consumption, the United States' power grid is currently experiencing its largest demand growth in eighty years, driven largely by massive data centers, new manufacturing facilities and cutting-edge innovations in artificial intelligence and cryptocurrency mining. This increase in electricity demand is both occurring faster than new generation is being brought online while also coinciding with the retirement of several large scale power plants in the PJM region. The mismatch in electricity supply and forecasted demand is in large part attributable to years of policy decisions and inactions at PJM, the regional transmission organization and independent system operator that manages the electric transmission grid for thirteen states and the District of Columbia, including Maryland. The PJM interconnection queue is currently so backlogged that, in 2023, PJM announced it would cease to accept applications for new generation projects. As a result, PJM now has a roughly 5 year wait time from application to approval for new generation sources coming online, resulting in hundreds of gigawatts (GW) of planned capacity, largely wind, solar, and storage assets, sitting in limbo rather than being able to service Maryland's electric load requirements. Given this delay, projects which were ready to

be deployed at the time of their application are often no longer viable due to changing economic realities by the time of their approval. As a result, Marylanders now face significant increases in their energy costs after decades of relatively stable electricity prices. This spike is exemplified by the 2025/2026 PJM capacity auction, which saw a 900% increase from previous years. The 2026/2027 capacity auction continued to push costs higher, closing at a record high of $329.17/MW-day cap, a 22% increase over the previous record breaking year, which will eventually be passed on to Maryland ratepayers as a portion of their utility bill.

Maryland is reliant on electricity generation from the other PJM states, with the state importing approximately 40% of its electricity needs. Meeting Maryland's energy needs and staving off continued dramatic increases in energy costs will require the rapid deployment of an "all of the above" energy strategy. Such a strategy must include solar and energy storage assets, which are among the only energy resources currently primed to cost effectively address the state's near-term energy challenges. 47% of the planned grid additions through 2030 are solar projects, due, in part, to the 37% decrease in the price of solar photovoltaics over the last decade. However, Maryland's current Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS), despite being amended multiple times since its enactment, is no longer the right policy framework to meet Maryland's near-term resource adequacy needs.

Maryland's Broken RPS

When Maryland's RPS was first enacted twenty years ago, the newly created renewable energy credits (RECs) were a powerful tool in jumpstarting renewable energy generation in the state. RECs are a market-based instrument that represent the social and other non-power attributes of renewable electricity generation. RECs are issued when 1 megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity is generated from a renewable energy resource and are acquired by the electric load serving entities (utilities and retail energy suppliers) to show compliance with the RPS. Maryland's RPS also created a carveout for meeting solar-specific targets, thus creating the Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC). To comply with Maryland's RPS, electricity suppliers must acquire RECs derived from Maryland-certified Tier 1 and Tier 2 renewable sources, with the state's 14.5% solar carveout being a subset of Tier 1. Not meeting the necessary RPS requirements obliges Maryland's electric load serving entities to pay an alternate compliance payment (ACP) penalty.

In recent years Maryland's RPS obligations have increasingly been satisfied by ACPs, with the $365 million paid in ACPs in 2024. The rise in ACP payments represents a shift in how electricity suppliers comply with Maryland's RPS obligations, electing to pay ACPs rather than retire RECs due to the inability to purchase RECs at prices lower than the ACP. As a result, Maryland ratepayer dollars are funneled away from directly investing in new renewable energy generation and towards ACP penalties, which are deposited into the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund.

Affordable Solar Act Summary

The Affordable Solar Act addresses the cost and administrative inefficiencies of Maryland's current RPS by providing a new pathway for linking in-state electric consumption with in-state electricity generation and

establishing a methodology to right-size incentives for new solar energy projects, rather than taking a "one-size fits all" approach as currently exists in Maryland's SREC market, where a single REC equates to 1 MWh of electricity generation. The Affordable Solar Acts SREC-II and REC-II acknowledges the needs of the different solar market segments and project types by ensuring individual projects can receive the incentives they need to come online, while ensuring unneeded incentives are not passed through to ratepayers.

Under the Affordable Solar Act, utility-scale projects will be issued a guaranteed fixed price contract by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC), subject to competitive procurement bids including cost-benefit analyses, other criteria such as brownfield siting, and a requirement that projects directly serve Maryland load. This process minimizes cost to ratepayers while ensuring the project is economically viable. The procurement also includes labor protections and community benefit agreements. SREC-II and REC-IIs are subsequently issued to these projects, which will operate to make up the difference between the fixed price issued by the PSC and market price sales for electricity to ensure project viability. This approach to utility-scale incentive-setting has been successful in other states, including Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Illinois. The Affordable Solar Act builds upon these proven successes.

Distribution scale solar projects are subject to an Administratively Determined Incentive (ADI) set by the PSC. ADIs are set for projects within given capacity blocks – groupings of market sectors – to ensure broad growth of distributed generation across the state. Through setting the value of an ADI, the PSC can tailor the incentive amount a given project receives for each of the identified market sectors, allowing for a balancing between the amount of incentives required to promote market growth across the sectors, without overly burdening ratepayers with incentive costs that exceed economic requirements for development. As is the case with competitive procurement for utility scale projects, the ADI model has been successful in other states to ensure ratepayer protection alongside promoting renewable generation construction to meet the state's load.

The Affordable Solar Act allows for project flexibility and targeted incentives to spur solar development, ensuring that energy projects will directly benefit the state's energy requirements and directly benefit ratepayers. This pathway allows for flexibility to respond to future energy demands and provides near-term solutions to Maryland's resource adequacy challenges. For these reasons, SEIA strongly supports this legislation and respectfully urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB341, the Affordable Solar Act. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Georgina Arreola-Lennox

Georgina Arreola-Lennox
Mid-Atlantic Regional Director
Solar Energy Industries Association
garreola@seia.org

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341 Affordable Solar Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Gita Lefstein
Position: FAV

Testimony on Senate Bill - FAVORABLE

SB0341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsors: Senators Brooks, Kramer, and Lam

Committee: Education, Energy, and Environment

Position: FAVORABLE

February 17, 2026

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

My name is Gita Lefstein, and I am a resident of Baltimore County, Maryland. I am writing in support of SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act. One of the provisions of the bill is to make what is often referred to as "balcony solar" permissible in Maryland. Currently most people have to get their electricity through PJM regulated utilities. Because of PJM's mismanagement of the grid, electricity costs have skyrocketed and our electricity comes mainly from fossil fuels, rather than clean energy sources. PJM is accountable to energy producers, transmitters, and distributors, rather than to consumers and voters, so this is likely to continue. In other parts of the world, and in other parts of our country, clean energy sources, which are cheaper, quicker to build, and better for the environment, are taking off. It is important for Maryland not to be left behind. Many people are unable to have rooftop solar because of being renters, living in apartment buildings, not being able to afford rooftop solar, or other reasons. They should be able to take advantage of "plug in" or "balcony solar".

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Gita Lefstein

SB341 Affordable Solar Act - FAV-HoCoCA.pdf
Uploaded by: HoCo Climate Action Organization
Position: FAV

HoCoClimateAction.org
Howard County, Maryland

Testimony: **SB0341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)**
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026
Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Submitting: Monica O'Connor for Howard County Climate Action
Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Committee Members:

HoCo Climate Action is a 350.org local chapter and a grassroots organization representing approximately 1,400 subscribers. We are also a member of the Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our organization works with residents and ally organizations to promote a safe climate and clean energy future. Specifically, we have worked extensively on building electrification to help Maryland achieve its ambitious climate goals, including net-zero emissions.

We urge you to vote **favorably** on **SB0341** - Affordable Solar Act

Maryland residents are increasingly burdened by high utility bills that continue to rise at a greater rate than inflation, with the burden falling especially hard on working class families. Meanwhile, the Trump administration remains fixated on thwarting the lowest cost and fastest to develop sources of new electricity generation - solar energy and windpower. **SB0341** directly addresses each of these issues, by making it easier and more cost-effective for residents in the state to utilize solar energy to reduce their utility bills for decades to come, and incentivizing new commercial and utility-scale generation that will increase reliability, lower the wholesale cost of electricity in the region, and delay the need for expensive new transmission capacity in the state.

The bill does this in several ways. First, it restructures the current Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) by directing the Public Service Commission (PSC) to create administratively determined incentive levels for Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs). This follows the lead of multiple states such as New Jersey, which have similarly made their RPS more cost effective using this new structure. The incentives will be tailored according to market segments such as residential, non-residential, and community solar, making the program more cost effective for the ratepayer, while ensuring forward-looking market growth. For larger, utility-scale projects, it directs the PSC to conduct a competitive procurement, driving down the cost of the incentive and creating the best value for the ratepayer. This will spur 4,000MW of new, in-state generation, reducing our dependence on out-of-state imported energy, while creating good paying Maryland-based jobs.

Secondly, it creates a new clean energy fund administered by the major utilities, and directs all proceeds from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund to this fund, which can only be used to build new, cost effective, in-state clean energy generation. In this way, funds that are paid by the ratepayer for clean energy investment can only be used for this purpose.

Finally, it opens the market for Portable Solar Energy Systems, allowing our low and moderate income renters and condo residents to utilize consumer friendly options for solar that don't involve permits, contractors or interconnection agreements. These systems, which will likely be available at major retailers such as Costco and Walmart, are UL listed for safety, and can literally be pulled out of the box and plugged into a standard 120v outlet. This will reduce the burden of utility bills for those that rent their homes, or don't have the means or ability to contract for a larger solar installation.

SB0341 also ensures that our labor force earns good paying wages for building out our clean energy future. The bill will help to get us back on track to fulfil the goals of the Climate Solutions Now Act. And, most importantly, will help to turn the tide on rising utility bills, helping our most vulnerable residents and working families with greater energy affordability.

The Energy Information Administration has just released a new report, forecasting that solar, wind and battery storage will provide over 99% of new electricity generating capacity in the U.S. in 2026. The reason for this is simple: Clean energy generation is the cheapest form of new generating capacity. And states that pivot away from fossil fuels and other expensive forms of generation will be the ones to reap the benefits of lower electricity costs far into the future.

For these reasons, **we urge a favorable report on SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act.**

Howard County Climate Action
Submitted by Monica O'Connor, Steering and Advocacy Committee
www.HoCoClimateAction.org
HoCoClimateAction@gmail.com

SB341_FAV_Iman_Habib.pdf
Uploaded by: Iman Habib
Position: FAV

PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND
P.O. Box 7595, Largo MD 20792
ProgressiveMaryland.org
Info@progressivemaryland.org

Bill Title: SB341 Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Position: SUPPORT (FAV)
To: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
From: Iman Habib, Climate Policy Analyst on behalf of Progressive Maryland
Date: February 10, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am Iman Habib—Climate Policy Analyst for Progressive Maryland which is a member-led, power-building organization that advocates for working class people tackling a plethora of issues, including energy affordability. We have over 125,000 members across the state with substantial membership bases in Baltimore City, Prince George's, Montgomery, Frederick, and Harford counties, and the Eastern Shore. We have also organized five tenant unions across Montgomery County and Prince George's, and have heard from renters on the ground that soaring energy bills are one of the primary determinants for the affordability crisis they find themselves in. For these reasons, **we are urging a favorable report on Senate Bill 341** which will promote solar build out in Maryland, making the future of affordability auspicious and the path toward a clean energy future propitious.

For our members who do not own property and are struggling to make ends meet, the portable solar provision in this bill is of crucial importance. SB341 enables the deployment of *portable solar*, which, unlike *rooftop solar*, can be plugged into any building outlet, and will enable renters who do not own their property to have access to clean energy. For residents who live in low-income, multi-family housing and rent their homes, this bill is critical in making a clean energy future accessible to underserved communities. When renters are able to use their own clean energy source to generate electricity, this reduces their reliance on utilities which are providing fossil-fuel powered electricity and charging higher rates.

These savings could be repurposed toward other necessities such as doctor's appointments, daycare, insurance payments, groceries, or other essential services working-class Marylanders may not otherwise have the means to afford. Moreover, the diversion from fossil-fuel-derived energy to clean alternatives like solar present additional environmental and health benefits and promote community health and well-being. **For these reasons, Progressive Maryland is in strong support of Senate Bill 341.**

Ceres Testimony SB341.pdf
Uploaded by: Jeff Mauk
Position: FAV

SB341– SUPPORT
Jeff Mauk
Ceres
jmauk@ceres.org

TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB341:
Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
February 17th, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee;

I write today on behalf of Ceres to respectfully urge a favorable report from the Committee on SB341, the Affordable Solar Act. Ceres is a nonprofit organization that works with investors, companies, and financial leaders to promote sustainability solutions. Through our Business for Innovative Climate and Energy Policy Network (BICEP), we mobilize over 80 major employers, including several companies doing business in MD, to advocate for more affordable and sustainable climate and clean energy policies.

Executive Summary
This legislation represents a critical opportunity to strengthen MD's clean energy economy, attract millions in private investment, create thousands of good-paying jobs, and provide substantial long-term savings for MD businesses and ratepayers.

From a business perspective, SB341 delivers three compelling outcomes:

- Market certainty through a predictable procurement schedule that enables project financing and development
- Economic development through 4,000 MW of new solar deployment, creating jobs and additional tax revenue
- Ratepayer protection through competitive procurement, cost caps, and built-in benefits from avoided capacity costs

Market Certainty Drives Investment and Lower Costs

The renewable energy industry has demonstrated that market certainty reduces financing costs and project prices. SB341's structured procurement schedule provides the visibility that developers, manufacturers, and financiers need to commit capital efficiently.

For the distributed solar market, the administratively determined incentive (ADI) program creates a stable, transparent pathway for residential, commercial, and community solar projects. Fixed pricing for 15 years allows businesses to:

- Secure favorable debt financing with predictable revenue streams
- Reduce equity requirements through lower risk premiums
- Scale operations and workforce with confidence
- Pass savings to customers through lower installed costs

Job Creation and Economic Development

The deployment of 4,000 MW of new solar capacity potentially represents millions of dollars in private capital investment in MD over the next decade. This investment will generate:

- Direct construction jobs: Thousands of skilled positions in electrical work, installation, project management, and engineering. The bill's prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements ensure quality jobs with family-sustaining wages while developing MD's clean energy workforce.
- Operations and maintenance employment: Long-term positions for the 15-25 year life of these facilities, providing stable careers in communities across MD.
- Supply chain and service industries: Expanded opportunities for MD companies in manufacturing, logistics, engineering, legal services, finance, and insurance.
- Tax revenue: Significant new property tax revenue for local governments hosting solar projects, providing funding for schools, infrastructure, and public services without burdening residents.

Energy Price Stability and Hedge Against Volatility

Solar energy provides MD businesses and consumers with a powerful hedge against fossil fuel price volatility. Unlike natural gas generation, where fuel costs can spike dramatically due to supply disruptions, geopolitical events, or market manipulation, solar has zero fuel costs. The fixed-price SREC-II contracts lock in energy costs for 15 years, providing certainty for business planning and protecting ratepayers from future price shocks.

This price stability is particularly valuable given:

- Increasing volatility in natural gas markets

- Growing global competition for liquified natural gas (LNG)
- Potential carbon pricing or emissions regulations that could increase fossil fuel costs

Supporting MD Business Competitiveness

MD businesses increasingly view clean energy access as essential to their competitiveness. Major corporations are setting aggressive carbon reduction targets and seeking to source renewable energy for their operations. SB 341 helps MD businesses:

- Meet sustainability commitments: Access to in-state solar generation enables MD companies to achieve their climate goals while supporting the local economy.
- Attract and retain talent: Workers, particularly younger employees, increasingly prefer companies with strong environmental credentials.
- Reduce energy costs: Community solar and distributed generation options allow businesses of all sizes to access solar energy without capital investment.
- Enhance competitiveness: Companies can market their MD operations as powered by clean energy, meeting customer and investor expectations.

Regional Competitiveness

MD risks falling behind neighboring states in clean energy deployment. Virginia has established aggressive solar targets and attracted billions in private investment. New Jersey and Delaware also have substantial solar procurement programs. Without SB341, MD loses economic development opportunities to competing states.

Conclusion

SB341 represents sound economic policy that delivers measurable benefits to MD businesses, workers, and ratepayers. The legislation's combination of market certainty, competitive procurement, cost controls, and workforce development creates the foundation for sustainable solar industry growth.

From a business perspective, the Affordable Solar Act provides:

- Predictable markets that reduce financing costs and project prices
- Substantial job creation and economic development
- Protection for ratepayers through hard cost caps and competitive procurement
- Long-term price stability and hedge against fossil fuel volatility
- Support for MD business competitiveness and sustainability goals

Ceres urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB341. This legislation represents a critical investment in MD's economic future, creating quality jobs, attracting private capital, and delivering affordable clean energy to MD families and businesses.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Mauk
Director, State Policy, Eastern Region, Ceres

SB0341 Testimony JV Johnson 2026.pdf
Uploaded by: Jeffrey Johnson
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341
Public Utilities
Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits
(Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Organization Submitting: Chesapeake Earth Holders
Person Submitting: Jeffrey V. Johnson, co-founder and board member
Position: **FAVORABLE**

My name is Dr. Jeffrey V. Johnson and I live in Maryland Legislative District 10 in upper Baltimore County. I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0341 on behalf of the Chesapeake Earth Holders Community, a member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition and the Interfaith Power and Light DMV network of faith based congregations. Our members throughout Maryland strongly support the Affordable Solar Act. We have all been shocked at the rising utility bills that have occurred in the past year. Although some of us have already invested in solar panels for our homes, many of us live in apartments or in homes that do not allow for the installation of roof top solar. This bill would help so many Marylanders who have wanted to move to solar power but have been unable to do so for both practical and financial reasons. This bill would particularly help those who are renting, or who can't really afford expensive roof top systems. The Affordable Solar Act would extensively broaden the base of those who are able to benefit from this form of clean energy.

On a more personal note, I am a 77 year old retiree living on the western edge of Baltimore County in upper Reistertown. We have long power lines going out to the road and experience frequent power outages as do many others in the rural parts of our state. It would be a wonderful addition to our home if we could have a portable solar power system that we could afford along with batteries when the power goes out. For me and my neighbors the Affordable Solar Act has real benefits on a practical level.

By expanding the pool of Maryland Citizens who are using new types of portable solar systems the whole grid gets stronger because more and more people can pump some of their new, clean energy back into it. For all of these reasons we strongly support SB0341 and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

SB341_ JerryKickenson_Favorable.pdf
Uploaded by: Jerry Kickenson
Position: FAV

February 17, 2026

TESTIMONY ON SB341 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Jerry Kickenson

My name is Jerry Kickenson. I am a resident of District 18 and I am submitting this testimony in support of SB341, Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act).

Maryland is well behind in its goals for renewable energy generation and contributing to reduction in fossil fuel use and its harm to our climate and environment, as well as fossil fuel generation's disproportionate impact on the poor and communities of color.

Renewable energy, especially solar energy, is available now and is also by many measures the least expensive energy generation option. In a period of rising electricity costs to ratepayers, this clean and cheapest source of electric power should be encouraged and supported by the state of Maryland. It's only common sense!

SB341 will reform Maryland's existing solar incentives programs in several important ways: establishing a dedicated funding instrument for solar energy, supporting 4 GW of additional solar capacity beyond 2028 divided between utility scale and smaller distributed sources, reforming how SRECs (Solar Renewable Energy Credits) are procured and priced, and expanding access to solar power through portable and "balcony" solar installation.

These measures, taken together, promise to support Maryland's climate, environmental and environmental justice goals while also putting downward pressure on consumer electric prices. A win-win!

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB341, Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act).

Respectfully,

Jerry Kickenson

Wheaton, MD 20902

SB341_mdsierraclub_fav-19feb2026.pdf
Uploaded by: Josh Tulkin
Position: FAV

SIERRA CLUB
MARYLAND CHAPTER

P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: SB 341 -- Affordable Solar Act
Position: Support
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report for HB 341, the Affordable Solar Act. This follow-up to the 2023 Brighter Tomorrow Act strengthens the pathway to cost-effective, local, and clean solar power, from residential rooftop to utility-scale.

Maryland is falling behind on its ambitious clean energy goals.[1] In order to get back on track, Maryland needs to drive a significant expansion of solar energy in all forms—both utility-scale and behind-the-meter. Grid reliability, and costs faced by ratepayers, are both being jeopardized by growing demand, particularly from data centers in our multi-state region.[2] Reducing our reliance on dirty fuels is also crucial to reduce the serious health impacts associated with air pollution.[3]

Solar energy has become the world's cheapest power source, and its increased coupling with ever-improving batteries has made solar-and-storage projects cost-competitive with gas peaker plants.[4] However, current federal policy is promoting fossil fuel energy while opposing renewables.[5,6,7] It is incumbent upon Maryland to respond to the challenges created by federal policy while meeting the state's need for affordable, clean energy.

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[1] Maryland Energy Administration, *Reaching 100 Percent Net Carbon-Free Electricity in Maryland,* (Maryland Energy Administration, 2025) https://energy.maryland.gov/Reports/MEA%20100%20Clean%20Electricity%20Report.pdf
[2] Rachel McCrea, "Maryland lawmakers push for new power amid concerns about high costs." *Capital News Service,* April 2, 2025, https://cnsmaryland.org/2025/04/02/maryland-lawmakers-push-for-new-power-amid-concerns-about-high-costs/
[3] American Lung Association, "New Report on Air Pollution in Maryland: For Ozone Smog, Thirteen of 15 Graded Counties Post Worse Results; All Graded Counties Post Worst Results for Both Daily & Year-Round Particle Pollution," press release, April 23 2025, https://www.lung.org/media/press-releases/2025-md-sota
[4] University of Surrey, "Solar energy is now the world's cheapest source of power, study finds." *Tech Xplore,* October 6 2025, https://techxplore.com/news/2025-10-solar-energy-world-cheapest-source.html
[5] Maxine Joselow and Lisa Friedman, "Trump Halts 5 Wind Farms Off the East Coast," *The New York Times,* December 22 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/22/climate/trump-offshore-wind-farms.html
[6] Jake Spring, "Trump administration limits subsidies for solar, wind projects," *The Washington Post,* August 15 2025 https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2025/08/15/tax-credits-renewable-energy-projects/
[7] Spencer Kimball, "Trump megabill gives the oil industry everything it wants and ends key support for solar and wind," *CNBC,* July 3 2025, https://www.cnbc.com/2025/07/03/trump-one-big-beautiful-bill-oil-gas-coal-solar-wind-ira-tax-incentive-repeal.html?msockid=339a416a464267c32782540947db66aa

This bill responds to this need in multiple ways:

- It restructures the current incentive (Solar Renewable Energy Credit, or SREC) program in a manner that protects ratepayers and ensures solar incentives are effectively tailored to each market segment (i.e., rooftop, community, and utility-scale). It does so in two ways:
    - 1) Directing the PSC to conduct competitive procurements for utility-scale solar, thereby ensuring value for ratepayers; and
    - 2) Directing the PSC to establish and regularly recalculate incentive prices for rooftop and community solar based on changes in federal policy and the market.
- It shifts funds paid by ratepayers (through their utilities) in the form of Alternative Compliance payments (ACPs) into an escrow account that will be used to implement this new solar procurement model. In so doing, it ensures that ACPs are used for their intended use—procuring renewable energy—instead of potentially being redirected for other purposes.
- Finally, it would legalize balcony solar[8] in Maryland. Also known as plug-in solar, this technology is popular in Germany and the Utah legislature approved its usage in the state with bipartisan support.[9] It creates the possibility for renters—as well as homeowners who cannot have rooftop solar—to generate solar power without permitting or installation costs. For many renters, balcony solar can meet 10-30% of their electricity needs and travel with them if they move.

By putting the right incentives in place for utility-scale, community, and rooftop solar, in addition to enabling balcony solar, the Affordable Solar Act will accelerate Maryland's clean energy transition and move us towards our climate goals. The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports SB 0341. We urge a favorable report.

Bruce Daggy
Energy Team Member
Brucedaggy@gmail.com

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

[8] Dana Drugmand, "Plug-In Solar Power Could Be Coming to a Balcony Near You," *Sierra Magazine* November 7 2025, https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/plug-solar-power-could-be-coming-balcony-near-you
[9] John Fitzgerald Weaver, "Balcony solar gains unanimous bipartisan support in Utah," *pv magazine USA,* March 2 2025 https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2025/03/05/balcony-solar-gains-unanimous-bipartisan-support-in-utah/

SB0341 - Affordable Solar Act- Favorable.pdf
Uploaded by: Karl Held
Position: FAV

CLIMATE COALITION
Montgomery County, MD

Testimony on: SB0341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment
Organization: Climate Coalition Montgomery County
Submitting: Karl Held
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members:

We are providing our testimony today in strong support of SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act. The Climate Coalition of Montgomery County is composed of 20 grassroots and professional organizations focused on climate change and we urge you to vote favorably on SB0341.

Maryland is facing an affordability crisis, as utility bills continue to rise at a greater rate than inflation, with the burden falling especially hard on working class families. Concurrently, the Trump administration continues its assault on the lowest cost and fastest to develop sources of new electricity generation - solar energy and windpower.

SB0341 directly addresses each of these issues, by making it easier and more cost-effective for residents in the state to utilize solar energy to reduce their utility bills for decades to come, and incentivizing new commercial and utility-scale generation that will increase reliability, lower the wholesale cost of electricity in the region, and delay the need for expensive new transmission capacity in the state.

The bill does this in several ways. First, it restructures the current Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) by directing the Public Service Commission (PSC) to create administratively determined incentive levels for Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs). This follows the lead of multiple states such as New Jersey, which have similarly made their RPS more cost effective using this new structure. The incentives will be tailored according to market segments such as residential, non-residential, and community solar, making the program more cost effective for the ratepayer, while ensuring forward-looking market growth. For larger, utility-scale projects, it directs the PSC to conduct a competitive procurement, driving down the cost of the incentive and creating the best value for the ratepayer. This will spur 4,000MW of new, in-state generation, reducing our dependence on out-of-state imported energy, while creating good paying Maryland-based jobs.

Secondly, it creates a new clean energy fund administered by the major utilities and directs all proceeds from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund to this fund, which can only be used to

build new, cost effective, in-state clean energy generation. In this way, funds that are paid by the ratepayer for clean energy investment can only be used for this purpose.

Finally, it opens the market for Portable Solar Energy Systems, allowing our low- and moderate-income renters and condo residents to utilize consumer friendly options for solar that don't involve permits, contractors or interconnection agreements. These systems, which will likely be available at major retailers such as Costco and Walmart, are UL listed for safety, and can literally be pulled out of the box and plugged into a standard 120v outlet. This will reduce the burden of utility bills for those that rent their homes, or don't have the means or ability to contract for a larger solar installation.

SB0341 also ensures that our labor force earns good paying wages for building out our clean energy future. The bill will help to get us back on track to fulfil the goals of the Climate Solutions Now Act. And, most importantly, will help to turn the tide on rising utility bills, helping our most vulnerable residents and working families with greater energy affordability.

The Energy Information Administration has just released a new report, forecasting that solar, wind and battery storage will provide over 99% of new electricity generating capacity in the U.S. in 2026. The reason for this is simple: Clean energy generation is the cheapest form of new generating capacity. And states that pivot away from fossil fuels and other expensive forms of generation will be the ones to reap the benefits of lower electricity costs far into the future.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act.

MF_SB 341_ Affordable Solar Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Kathy Kinsey
Position: FAV

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Testimony on: Senate Bill 341– Affordable Solar Act
Organization: Mobilize Frederick
Submitting: Kathy Kinsey
Chair, Government Affairs Committee
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 341 – the Affordable Solar Act.

Mobilize Frederick, a nonprofit community advocacy organization formed to assist with implementation of innovative local solutions to address climate change, strongly urges the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on SB 341.

Maryland and other PJM Interconnection states are facing sharply rising electricity rates and an unprecedented shortfall in generating capacity as growth in peak electricity demand from data centers and other high-load customers outpaces growth in supply. Bringing new solar energy generating projects online is now the most cost-effective and fastest way to provide new commercial and utility-scale generation that's needed to close the gap in supply, reduce the need for costly new ratepayer-funded transmission lines, and stabilize electricity prices.

SB 341 would incentive new residential, commercial, and utility-scale solar projects by reforming the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). In addition, it would expand the benefits of solar to renters, condominium owners, low- and moderate-income households, and homeowners whose roofs are not suitable for rooftop solar through authorization of affordable portable balcony solar systems.

The bill replaces the existing solar renewable energy credit (SREC) structure with a two-tier SREC system that directs the Public Service Commission to: (1) administratively set SREC incentive prices for residential, non-residential, and community solar projects taking market considerations into account: and (2) for larger utility-scale solar projects, conduct a procurement for projects that will ensure cost-competitive incentive prices.

Under the bill, alternative compliance payments from utilities that fail to achieve compliance with the RPS will be directed into an escrow fund for investment in new clean in-state energy generation. This revamped program is expected to incentive 4,000 MW of new solar generation, and by 2035, more than double the solar share of Maryland's current electricity generation portfolio.

Finally, by authorizing the sale and installation of affordable simple-to-install portable balcony solar systems that consumers will likely be able to purchase directly from retailers, HB 345 will tap into an entirely new residential market for solar.

By enabling the State to shift away from reliance on higher cost fossil fuel generation, this bill will also boost grid capacity, help to control rising electricity prices, and advance progress toward achieving the State's air quality and climate goals.

For all the foregoing reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 341.

Sincerely,

KATHY KINSEY
Chair, Government Affairs Committee

cc: Karen Cannon
Executive Director

MRSC - testimony on Affordable Solar Act - SB341.p
Uploaded by: Katie Rever
Position: FAV

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 341: Affordable Solar Act - FAVORABLE

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

The Maryland Rooftop Solar Coalition (MRSC) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 341. MRSC is a coalition of a dozen national, regional, and local companies committed to growing Maryland's rooftop solar market. Our members are creating durable jobs and helping Marylanders reduce and manage their electricity bills with home solar and storage systems.

Residential solar accounts for over 1/3 of the deployed solar in our state. It is an integral part of our state's response to climate change, and particularly when paired with storage, can reduce strain on the grid from electrification. In other climate-leading states that have proper policy structures, residential rooftop solar provides a cornerstone for building their clean energy economy, steadily deploying megawatts of solar each year. As with other home improvement industries, the jobs created by rooftop solar are inherently local, stable and family-sustaining.

Although Maryland's Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) market has been successful in deploying residential solar to date, the structure of this incentive program does not allow for adjustments as the market adjusts nor does it account for the inherent differences between solar market segments. Indeed, it requires a 10kW residential system to compete with a 10,000kW community solar system or a 100,000kW utility scale system. The direction taken by the Affordable Solar Act is the correct one – it differentiates the incentive structure based on the market segment – allowing the Maryland Public Utility Commission to 'right size' the incentives delivered to each solar system as well as reducing financial risk inherent in the SREC market – and therefore overall costs to ratepayers.

The Maryland Rooftop Solar Coalition urges a favorable report on SB 341.

Sincerely,

Katie Rever
katie.rever@igs.com
Treasurer, MRSC

Welch favorable testimony on Senate Bill 0341.pdf
Uploaded by: Laura Welch
Position: FAV

SB0341-Support
Laurie Welch
Takoma Park, MD
Laurawelch123@gmail.com
301-928-1624

SB0341

Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits

(Affordable Solar Act)

Education Energy and Transportation

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

My name is Laurie Welch. I live in Maryland legislative district 20. I am writing in support of SB 0341.

Takoma Park, and Maryland itself, is a wonderful place to live. I've been proud to see my state be in the forefront on climate actions, such as joining RGGI and passing the Climate Now Solutions Act in 2022. In 2025 the MD Dept of the Environment presented a plan that covered 25 agencies and outlined more than 100 priority actions to lower emissions; the implementation of these would go a long way to meeting the goals set in 2022.

However the execution of many of these initiatives partially relies on federal grants, which have been dramatically reduced under the Trump presidency. The big bad ugly law has eliminated federal tax credits for rooftop solar for residential customers and others. US Environmental Protection Agency has declared that green house gases are not a threat to our health and the environment, and the Defense Department is required to purchase electricity from coal fired generators. These changes in federal policy make it imperative that Maryland establish a state system to encourage investment in solar facilities and that is exactly what the **Affordable Solar Act** will do.

First, the Affordable Solar Act provides a path for individuals and households living in apartments to invest in solar through the balcony solar initiative. Under this section of the Act, apartment dwellers will be able to hang solar panels from their balconies without interference from utilities as long as they meet Underwriters Laboratory standards.

Second, the Affordable Solar Act requires that 2,000 MW of industrial scale solar be constructed in Maryland. Industrial scale solar is the cheapest way to generate electricity, much cheaper than natural gas or nuclear facilities. [1] Moreover, industrial scale solar can be in place before 2030 while natural gas and nuclear facilities cannot begin to generate electricity until many years into the future. In addition, industrial scale solar facilities combined with batteries are just as reliable as natural gas facilities.[2] Because industrial scale solar with batteries is reliable, investment in these facilities will increase the supply of reliable capacity and therefore reduce the price of capacity in the PJM capacity market.

Third, the Affordable Solar requires that 2,000 MW of distributed solar be constructed in Maryland. Most of this investment will be "Behind the Meter" solar on residential homes and commercial buildings. Behind the meter solar reduces Maryland's dependence on the PJM grid and protects Maryland consumers from the impacts of large data centers on electricity rates accessed through the PJM grid. Furthermore, because PJM allocates capacity and transmission costs on the basis of relative peak demand, behind the meter solar, by reducing Maryland's peak demand, will reduce the amount of revenue flowing from Maryland consumers to PJM vested interests. PJM's voting membership and its board are dominated by utilities; we can't rely on PJM to solve the problem of rising electric costs in Maryland.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Thank you for your consideration.

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[1] lazards-lcoeplus-june-2025.pdf

[2] PJM. "December 2023 Effective Load Carrying Capability (ELCC) Report. Available at: elcc-report-december-2023.ashx.

SB341- Affordable Solar Act_EEE_CJW_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray
Position: FAV

Testimony on: SB0341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Richard Deutschmann
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members:

We are providing our testimony today in strong support of SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act. The Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing is a statewide coalition of 32 grassroots and professional organizations focused on climate justice and we urge you to vote favorably on SB0341.

Maryland is facing an affordability crisis, as utility bills continue to rise at a greater rate than inflation, with the burden falling especially hard on working class families. Concurrently, the Trump administration continues its assault on the lowest cost and fastest to develop sources of new electricity generation - solar energy and wind power.

SB0341 directly addresses each of these issues, by making it easier and more cost-effective for residents in the state to utilize solar energy to reduce their utility bills for decades to come, and incentivizing new commercial and utility-scale generation that will increase reliability, lower the wholesale cost of electricity in the region, and delay the need for expensive new transmission capacity in the state.

The bill does this in several ways. First, it restructures the current Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) by directing the Public Service Commission (PSC) to create administratively determined incentive levels for Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs). This follows the lead of multiple states such as New Jersey, which have similarly made their RPS more cost effective using this new structure. The incentives will be tailored according to market segments such as residential, non-residential, and community solar, making the program more cost effective for the ratepayer, while ensuring forward-looking market growth. For larger, utility-scale projects, it directs the PSC to conduct a competitive procurement, driving down the cost of the incentive and creating the best value for the ratepayer. This will spur 4,000MW of new, in-state generation, reducing our dependence on out-of-state imported energy, while creating good paying Maryland-based jobs.

Secondly, it creates a new clean energy fund administered by the major utilities and directs all proceeds from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund to this fund, which can only be used to build new, cost effective, in-state clean energy generation. In this way, funds that are paid by the ratepayer for clean energy investment can only be used for this purpose.

Finally, it opens the market for Portable Solar Energy Systems, allowing our low- and moderate-income renters and condo residents to utilize consumer friendly options for solar that don't involve

permits, contractors or interconnection agreements. These systems, which will likely be available at major retailers such as Costco and Walmart, are UL listed for safety, and can literally be pulled out of the box and plugged into a standard 120v outlet. This will reduce the burden of utility bills for those that rent their homes, or don't have the means or ability to contract for a larger solar installation.

SB0341 also ensures that our labor force earns good paying wages for building out our clean energy future. The bill will help to get us back on track to fulfil the goals of the Climate Solutions Now Act. And, most importantly, will help to turn the tide on rising utility bills, helping our most vulnerable residents and working families with greater energy affordability.

The Energy Information Administration has just released a new report, forecasting that solar, wind and battery storage will provide over 99% of new electricity generating capacity in the U.S. in 2026. The reason for this is simple: Clean energy generation is the cheapest form of new generating capacity. And states that pivot away from fossil fuels and other expensive forms of generation will be the ones to reap the benefits of lower electricity costs far into the future.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act.

350MoCo
Adat Shalom Climate Action
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry
Chesapeake Earth Holders
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Climate Parents of Prince George's
Climate Reality Project
ClimateXChange
Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
Echotopia
Elders Climate Action Maryland
Fix Maryland Rail
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
HoCoClimateAction
IndivisibleHoCoMD
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Maryland Third Act
Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund
Mobilize Frederick
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Mountain Maryland Movement
Nuclear Information & Resource Service
Progressive Maryland
Safe & Healthy Playing Fields
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

I am sharing 'I am sharing 'SB341 Affordable Solar
Uploaded by: Lee McNair
Position: FAV

SB341 Affordable Solar Act

Organization: Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Environmental Justice Ministry

Submitted by: Lee McNair

Position: Favorable

Committee: EEE

As people who are faith-based, we look at bills through the lens of our principles and values which call us to protect, not just ourselves, but also those among us whose voices are often not heard or disregarded. Rising utility rates make it extremely difficult for many residents to keep their utilities on even in extreme weather events.

We think this bill will help to remedy this dire situation by incentivizing more solar and battery storage. This form of energy is less expensive to build and can come online faster than some other forms of energy procurement. Plus this enables portable solar which paired with a battery will offer energy resillience to households with lower incomes.

And this bill puts Alternative Compliance Payments into an escrow account to be used to implement this new solar model without further raising ratepayer costs.

We believe this is a fair and just bill for all Maryland ratepayers and we urge you to provide a favorable outcome for SB341, the Affordable Solar Act.

HB0341 FAVORABLE.pdf
Uploaded by: Lydia LaGue
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Person submitting: Lydia Goble LaGue

Position: FAVORABLE

I am a member of AARP, Indivisible Frederick Coalition and Third Act Maryland, among other groups. I am writing on behalf of Third Act Maryland's Democracy Working Group. **Third Act MD** is group of older Maryland adults working collectively to promote climate justice and democracy efforts. We are also part of the **Maryland Legislative Coalition**, all unpaid citizen lobbyists, with well over 300 members.

So many Maryland citizens are seeing crazy increases to their utility bills, despite no change in usage to account for the higher bills. Apparently, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has done little if anything to invest in solar and other clean energy sources. We cannot continue this way. It is now time for Maryland to act!

This bill would:

- phase out the current solar subsidy program
- replace it with a new program requiring the PSC to conduct competitive procurements for utility scale solar and ensure that the new systems are built with the best value for rate-payers.
- require the PSC to establish incentive prices for rooftop and community solar.

All of this will be achieved without costing additional increases for rate payers because the Alternative Compliance Payments that have already been paid by rate payers will be put into an escrow account used to implement this new solar model.

In addition, this bill would incentivize portable, small scale solar systems that plug directly into a standard outlet and require no rooftop installation, thus offsetting consumption and expense on a per/home basis. And – Bonus - when paired with a battery, this offers households an emergency back up during outages.

Passing this bill will help many Marylanders of all economic levels, especially renters like myself, countless other seniors, and young families who cannot invest in traditional rooftop solar, in addition to homeowners with shaded or otherwise unsuitable roofs.

Enacting the bill will make it possible to greatly increase the amount of clean energy going into the grid and into people's homes.

I strongly support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

SB 341 - National Aquarium - Support.pdf
Uploaded by: Maggie Ostdahl
Position: FAV

NATIONAL AQUARIUM®

Date: February 19, 2026

Bill: SB 341 – Affordable Solar Act

Position: Support

Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report on **SB 341**. This legislation would build on the Brighter Tomorrow Act of 2023 by modernizing solar access and incentives for Marylanders, lower costs for ratepayers, and take steps to insulate Maryland's renewable energy development from federal interference.

One of the National Aquarium's three strategic conservation goals is to combat climate change. We do this through a holistic, solutions-focused approach, which includes communicating ocean and climate science, building resilience through community empowerment, implementing nature-based solutions, and reducing our own carbon footprint with a commitment to achieve net-zero Scopes 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035. Reaching this target requires the state to increase its renewable energy production, including through responsible development of solar and offshore wind. The National Aquarium's two-panel solar tree on Pier 4 educates the public to this effect, describing the important role solar and other forms of renewable energy play in lowering the financial and environmental cost of energy production.

This legislation contains several provisions to ensure that solar energy remains a crucial part of Maryland's energy future, especially important as federal efforts to discourage solar and other renewable energy development persist. SB 341 would reform Maryland's Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program and replace it with a proven model expected to support 4,000 new megawatts of grid electricity by 2035.

The Aquarium particularly appreciates that SB 341 promotes expanded access to solar energy by authorizing the purchase and installation of portable solar energy generating systems for residential use. Rooftop solar is also a critical piece of Maryland's solar energy portfolio, but it has presented obstacles to Marylanders that rent, belong to lower-income households, or are homeowners with shaded roofs. Portable or balcony solar units are a proven solution that expands access to solar energy and its benefits, including lower costs, reduced pollution, and improved energy resilience when paired with a battery system. These individual units are compact, do not require rooftop access, and can plug directly into a standard outlet. States such as Utah have seen tremendous demand when rolling out their own portable and balcony solar programs. These units are an efficient, affordable, and accessible way for Marylanders to literally plug into renewable energy and experience immediate relief from rising energy costs.

Maryland's energy systems are at an inflection point. Governments at every level must focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions rapidly while prioritizing a just transition away from fossil fuels. Now more than ever, the state of Maryland can and should build on its climate leadership by incentivizing additional solar energy across our state. **We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 341.**

Contact:
Maggie Ostdahl
Director of Conservation Policy
410-385-8275
mostdahl@aqua.org

SB0341 Feb 2026 testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Mary Mihalyi
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB 0341

AFFORDABLE SOLAR ACT

My name is Mary Mihalyi. I live in District 20 and I am strongly in favor of SB 0341.

As the federal government abandons any pretense of limiting climate change, Marylanders need our state legislators to stand up for our right to clean, renewable, affordable solar energy.

Rooftop, community, and portable solar systems are all needed in order to provide the greatest access to solar power. My husband and I were fortunate enough to have the means to install rooftop solar, with the assistance of federal tax credits, but many residents do not have the resources to do so. Others have the benefit of large shade trees but then have insufficient sun to capture solar energy, or live in apartments, shared housing, or rental properties, and do not have the option of rooftop solar. Portable or "balcony" solar in particular provides an innovative solution for apartment-dwellers and limited-income residents.

I recommend a FAVORABLE report on SB 0341.

Affordable Solar Act Senate Feb 17.pdf
Uploaded by: Michael Wilcove
Position: FAV

Citizens' Climate Lobby
Maryland

February 17, 2026	**HEARING DATE: February 19, 2026**
BILL:	**SB0341 (Companion bill: HB0345)**
TITLE:	**Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)**
POSITION:	**Favorable**
COMMITTEE:	**Energy, Education, and the Environment**
SPONSORS:	**Senators Brooks, Kramer, and Lam**

Hello Chairman Feldman, Vice Chairwoman Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michael N. Wilcove. I live in District 16 in Rockville Maryland, and I am honored to be representing the Maryland Chapters of Citizens' Climate Lobby. Citizens' Climate Lobby is a national, nonpartisan, volunteer driven climate advocacy organization. In Maryland, our Chapters consist of over 3000 residents from across the State.

Our Maryland Chapters support SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act.

Our volunteers advocate for solutions to the climate challenges we currently face. Our global dependency on burning fossil fuels is harming not only the climate, but our health, economy, and security.

Enhancing solar energy is crucial to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuel. Maryland has fallen short of its goals in solar deployment. With vital Inflation Reduction Act tax credits being taken away, increasing solar power will be even more daunting. The Affordable Solar Act will be a big step in shifting from fossil fuels and towards solar energy, setting up a target to connect 4,000 MW of solar capacity to the Maryland grid by 2035.

The Act modernizes the Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program by phasing out the current system and replacing it with SREC-II, modeled after New Jersey's competitive procurement framework. It introduces new programs for both smaller and larger solar projects to generate "Solar Renewable Energy Credits II" (SREC-IIs). Importantly, it redirects certain alternative compliance fees, which are penalties paid by electricity suppliers who do not meet renewable energy requirements, from the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund into a new escrow account that will ensure these funds are used for future solar energy procurement. Additionally, the bill mandates that electric companies procure a specific number of SRECs and SREC-IIs through solicitations managed by the Public Service Commission, aiming to significantly increase solar energy generation capacity in the state. The bill also allocates 75% of public service company franchise tax revenues from large electricity users to this new escrow account, further supporting solar energy initiatives. In addition, it changes the States's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) by increasing the required percentage of renewable energy, particularly from solar sources.

We especially want to emphasize our support for the part of the bill that allows the purchase and use of "portable solar energy generating system[s]," which are movable solar devices that plug into a standard electrical outlet, supply up to 1,200 watts of power, and require no rooftop installation. This change would help make solar energy accessible and affordable to Maryland renters and condo-owners, those with

unsuitable roofs, and help those with low incomes to lower their electricity bills. When paired with a battery, these portable solar systems would also increase the resilience of all these households during grid power outages.

Finally, the Act mandates that its implementation does not raise utility bills for residents.

Maryland residents want effective and fair climate policies. The policies put forth by the Affordable Solar Act help ensure it. The Maryland Chapters of Citizens Climate Lobby urge a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB0341.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael N. Wilcove
Coordinator, Citizens' Climate Lobby Maryland State Action Team
301-785-5793
mnwilcove@gmail.com
cc: Members of the Energy, Education, and the Environment Committee

SB 341 Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar R

Uploaded by: Michelle Dietz

Position: FAV

The Nature Conservancy
Maryland/DC

Thursday, February 19, 2026

TO: Senator Brian Feldman, Chair of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee, and Committee Members
FROM: Michelle Dietz, Director of Government Relations, The Nature Conservancy; Cait Kerr, State Policy Manager, The Nature Conservancy,
POSITION: Support SB341 Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports SB 341 offered by Senators Brooks, Kramer and Lam. SB341 builds on existing legislation to ensure long-term stability for solar deployment in Maryland to meet our state's growing energy needs and help meet our clean energy goals. Through reforming current incentive programs, like the Solar Renewable Energy Credit Program, while ensuring ratepayers aren't impacted by new solar procurement, the Affordable Solar Act codifies solar energy solutions while reducing impacts to ratepayers.

SB341 seeks to reform the current Solar Renewable Energy Credit Program (SREC) to expand clean energy deployment while maintaining access and affordability for households. Under the Affordable Solar Act, the current SREC program would be replaced with "SREC 2." This new program allows the Public Service Commission to conduct competitive procurements for utility-scale solar development, which will provide the best value for ratepayers. SREC 2 also establishes incentives for community solar and rooftop solar, with the flexibility for prices to be recalculated based on market changes and federal policy. These two features will incentivize solar development across various market segments, while also ensuring industry doesn't receive unfair incentives, prioritizing Marylanders first.

In addition to encouraging solar development expansion, the Affordable Solar Act also seeks to ensure ratepayers will not be unduly impacted by growing solar development. Current Alternative Compliance Payments would be redirected into an escrow account to be used to implement new solar procurement. The Nature Conservancy supports an approach that considers allowing a portion of these Alternative Compliance Payments to be made available for climate-related grants and programs administered by state entities including the Maryland Energy Administration and the Maryland Clean Energy Center.

Maryland's ambitious climate emissions goals mean we need to continue to prioritize clean, renewable energy deployment. Solar energy can lower utility bills, stabilize costs and provide clean energy for Marylanders. The Nature Conservancy commends Senators Brooks, Kramer and Lam on introducing SB341, which incentivizes solar energy development in our state while avoiding impacts to access and affordability. **Therefore, we urge a favorable report on SB341.**

QVM Testimony on SB0341.pdf
Uploaded by: Molly Mitchell
Position: FAV

Quaker Voice of Maryland

SB341 - SUPPORT

Molly Mitchell
Quaker Voice of Maryland
1mollymitchell@gmail.com
410 207-1190

SB0341 - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee February 19th, 2025

On behalf of Quaker Voice of Maryland, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0341, *Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)*.

As Friends, we are guided by a commitment to stewardship, equity, and care for our communities and our planet. SB0341 reflects these values by both ensuring that the transition to clean energy is fair and transparent and by expanding access to clean, affordable energy to all.

Families across the state are feeling the strain of rising electricity costs, often without knowing how those costs are determined. SB0341's escrow system would make this process transparent and provide Marylanders with confidence that the transition to clean energy is responsible and fair. It would protect ratepayers while helping us build the clean energy system we need to slow climate change.

We are especially encouraged by the bill's expansion of access to solar energy. Renters and others without rooftop options have long been excluded from access to clean, affordable energy, and the portable solar provisions in SB0341 change that. They allow more people to lower their energy bills and contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable grid, reflecting the Quaker values of equity and environmental stewardship.

SB0341 will help us achieve our renewable electricity goals, increase transparency in the rate-making process, and make cheap clean solar power more accessible to all.

For these reasons, and with optimism about the clean, equitable future we can build together, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0341.

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341.pdf
Uploaded by: Mona Guilfoil
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341- FAVORABLE

SB0341 - Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (AFFORDABLE SOLAR ACT)

Bill Sponsors: Senators Brooks, Kramer, and Lam

Committee: Education, Energy, and Environment

Position: FAVORABLE

February 17, 2026

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

My name is Mona Guilfoil, and I live in Union Bridge in Carroll County, Maryland. I am writing in support of SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act. I am in the process of having solar panels installed on my house. I could not afford to purchase the system outright---the most cost- effective way for a homeowner to regroup an investment in solar--- due to the end of the federal residential solar tax credits on December 31, 2025. I am securing my solar system instead through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). The solar panels on my house will not be owned by me but by the commercial installer; I will be purchasing the energy produced by the panels for a set monthly fee of roughly $275---quite a savings from my average monthly utility bill of $364. This monthly fee will not escalate but will remain at $275 for the 25-year term of the PPA. In the meantime, my neighbor's utility bill , without solar, is estimated to increase 4% each year. Sure, I am saving myself money, but the major reason I am going solar is to make a statement that I firmly believe in the evidence that solar energy is the fastest and most cost effective way to build new electricity generation, to lower utility bills, stabilize costs, and provide clean and renewable energy for us and for our children. In addition, plug-in or balcony solar would make some of these benefits available to Marylanders who rent, can't afford roof-top solar, or own homes with too much shade or unsuitable roofs.

Please, make solar affordable for all Marylanders. Vote in favor of SB 0341.

SB0341_Winston Testimony_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Pamela Winston
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Person Submitting: Pamela Winston

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0341. I am a long-time resident of Takoma Park and a volunteer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) and Third Act.

The Affordable Solar Act will go a long way toward ensuring that lower income Marylanders—and all Marylanders—will be able to participate in the benefits of solar even without the capacity or funds to adopt rooftop solar. It will contribute to lower energy costs. And it will level the energy playing field for residents across the state. Please adopt the Affordable Solar Act in its entirety.

Thank you.

Pamela Winston
8005 Glenside Drive
Takoma Park, MD 20912

2026 - SB0341 - Affordable Solar Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Patrick Crump
Position: FAV

MEPPN
Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

TESTIMONY FOR SB 0341

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FAVORABLE

TO: Senator Brian Feldman, Chair; Senator Cheryl Kagan, Vice-Chair; and the Members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Patrick Crump, member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

DATE: February 19, 2026

The Episcopal Church believes that global climate change is not only a scientific concern or environmental issue, but what the United Nations calls "the defining issue of our time... at a defining moment" (UN Secretary General, September 10, 2018). We believe that clean, safe, and renewable energy is essential to preserve God's creation, and our Church has passed numerous resolutions in support of this, such as on fossil fuel non-proliferation and supporting a clean energy future. And the Church is committed to environmental justice, with a specific concern for reducing economic impacts on lower-income communities.

We support the Affordable Solar Act for the following reasons:

- The legislation establishes a target to connect 4,000 MW of solar capacity to the Maryland grid by 2035, facilitated by a procurement process for utility-scale projects using funds already collected through the renewable energy portfolio standard;
- Protects funding for renewable energy from being diverted to offset Maryland's budget deficit; and
- Extends access to incentives for affordable renewable energy to renters, by adding SREC credits for portable solar energy generating systems, often referred to as "plug-in" or "balcony" solar.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland urges the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee to support the Affordable Solar Act, to strengthen Maryland's solar renewable energy credit program in a way that lowers energy costs and accelerates the state's transition to clean energy sources.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network requests a FAVORABLE report.

SB341 Affordable Solar Act_Alexander_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Peter Alexander
Position: FAV

SB0341– Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Testimony before Education, Energy and Environment Committee
February 19, 2026

Position: Favorable

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee, my name is Peter Alexander, and I represent the 1700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in ***support of SB0341***, Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act). We also want to thank Senator Brooks and his co-sponsors for submitting this important legislation.

Maryland is ready to lead on clean energy, and Marylanders are ready for change. Right now, Maryland families face some of the highest electricity costs in the nation and those costs keep rising. Electricity capacity auctions have cleared at record-high prices for the second year in a row. We believe that Maryland families deserve real solutions that give us control over our energy future, not just more expensive bills.

We are ready to build a system that protects ratepayers while moving forward with clean energy. SB0341 creates an escrow account system that ensures transparency and prevents utilities from passing excessive costs to customers. This approach balances our urgent need for clean energy with strong protections for our families and businesses.

In addition, SB0341 makes solar energy accessible to everyone independently of owning a house or not. The portable solar provisions open the door for renters to finally participate in the clean energy economy. A typical balcony system can reduce apartment electricity bills by 10-30%. We believe energy independence should be available to all Marylanders, not just those who own homes, and this bill breaks down such barriers that have kept solar access out of reach.

Finally, we are ready to meet the climate crisis with real action. We need bold steps to increase our current 7% electricity from renewable sources to meet our goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030. SB0341 moves us towards that goal.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to pass the Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. Let's make Maryland a environmental leader. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.

Peter Alexander, PhD
Indivisible HoCoMD
Woodbine, MD 21797

SB 341-Affordable Solar Act-Support-Phil Webster-U

Uploaded by: Phil Webster

Position: FAV

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony in Support of SB 341 - Public Utilities -
Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits -
Affordable Solar Act

TO: Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee
FROM: Phil Webster, PhD, Lead Advocate for the Climate
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.
DATE: February 19, 2026

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) strongly supports **SB 344 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits - Affordable Solar Act .** We are a faith-based advocacy organization based on Unitarian Universalist (UU) Values, including Interdependence (honoring the interdependent web of all existence) and Justice (where all feel welcome and can thrive). Working to mitigate, adapt to, and build resilience for climate change is central to our beliefs.

The **Affordable Solar Act** aligns with both of the values by:

a) Stabilizing the solar energy sector by restructuring the Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SREC),
b) Creating a clean energy fund (supported by Alternative Compliance Payments), to be administered by the major utilities, which can only be used to build in-state clean energy generation, and
c) Opening the door to Portable Solar Energy Systems (Balcony Solar) allowing low and moderate income renters and condo residents to utilize customer friendly options to save money on their utility bills.

We KNOW that fossil fuel-based energy systems are causing climate change.The **Affordable Solar Act** promotes generation of clean solar energy which is desperately needed AND it is demonstrably less expensive energy, relieving financial pressure on all Marylanders.

For these reasons we urge a FAVORABLE report on **SB 341**.

Phil Webster, PhD
Lead Advocate for the Climate UULM-MD

SB341 Ray Baker Baltimore DC Building Trades (FAV)

Uploaded by: Ray Baker

Position: FAV

February 19, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Ray Baker, Maryland Director, Baltimore DC Metro Building Trades Council on
SB 341: Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Position: FAVORABLE

Thank you, Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, for the opportunity to offer testimony on SB341. I am Ray Baker, Maryland Director of the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT's 28 affiliates represent more than 30,000 union construction workers across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The BDCBT supports SB341 which supports investments in solar energy production with the establishment of the Distributed Solar Facilities Incentive Program, all to develop thousands of megawatts of additional solar energy. Given the needs of the state, it is imperative that we continue to develop multiple mechanisms of addressing our need for energy production. This investment will help Maryland lower household utility bills, provide stable and predictable energy prices, meet clean energy goals, and continue a build out of a modernized, decarbonized power grid.

The build out is important to construction workers in Maryland. This legislation ensures workers will be paid prevailing wage rates and have the necessary labor standards and protections to deliver top of the line, high quality work. Additionally, the BDCBT and our affiliated unions are eager to be the hands that build infrastructure that contributes to lowering costs for Maryland families, like many of our members.

The combined benefits of fair wages and high-quality labor standards, energy cost reduction, and continued development of Maryland energy infrastructure demonstrates why the BDCBT urges a favorable report on SB341.

Ray Baker
Maryland Director, BDCBT
RBaker@BDCBT.org
410.585.7862

Affordable Solar Act SB0341 testimony R. LeVesque.

Uploaded by: Raymond LeVesque

Position: FAV

February 17, 2026	**HEARING DATE: February 19, 2026**
BILL:	**SB0341 (Cross-filed with HB0345)**
TITLE:	**Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)**
POSITION:	**FAVORABLE**
COMMITTEE:	**Education, Energy, and Environment**
SPONSORS:	**Senators Brooks, Kramer, and Lam**

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

I am happy to live in District 13 in Howard County, Maryland, and I am writing today in strong support of SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act.

This Act will enable powerful actions to mitigate the increasing climate challenges our State faces, while also addressing the rising financial impact energy bills have on Maryland residents. Our current dependency on fossil fuels not only contributes to further climate problems but also impacts our health, economy, and national security. As my last BGE bill confirmed for my family, energy takes a growing bite out of the budgets of all Marylanders and disproportionately impacts those with moderate and lower incomes.

Increasing the production of electricity from renewable sources is crucial to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels and moves us to a more stable cost of energy by being less driven by the market oscillations of transported fuels. Once installed, the 'fuel' of solar photovoltaic generators is delivered free daily. Maryland has fallen short of its goals to add solar as a meaningful source of grid-scale electricity. With the loss of valuable Inflation Reduction Act tax incentives, many businesses and households find it far less appealing – or even possible - to install solar power. The Affordable Solar Act will provide stable support to meaningfully shift Maryland toward more solar energy, both at utility scale and at household levels. Setting a target to connect 4,000 MW of solar capacity to the Maryland grid by 2035 is key to minimizing the growing climate change impacts we see increasingly across our State.

The Act improves the Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program with a system modeled after New Jersey's competitive procurement framework and introduces new programs for both smaller and larger solar projects to generate "Solar Renewable Energy Credits II" (SREC-IIs). Importantly, it directs certain alternative compliance fees, the penalties paid by electricity suppliers who do not meet their renewable energy requirements, into a new escrow account that will ensure these funds are used to procure more solar energy generation. Additionally, the bill mandates that electric companies procure a specific number of SRECs and SREC-IIs through solicitations managed by the Public Service Commission, aiming to significantly increase solar energy generation capacity in the state. The bill also allocates 75% of public service company franchise tax revenues originating from large electricity users to this new escrow account, further supporting solar energy initiatives. In another timely improvement, SB0341 modifies the States's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS), increasing the required percentage of renewable energy, particularly from solar sources. Utility-scale solar is one of the quickest-to-deploy new generation sources, with the lowest levelized cost of energy, as cited by Lazard in a June 2025 study. **https://www.lazard.com/news-announcements/lazard-releases-2025-levelized-cost-of-energyplus-report-pr/**

Closer to home, I praise and value that the bill legalizes the purchase and use of a "portable solar energy generating system," which is a movable solar device designed to safely plug into a standard electrical outlet and supply up to 1,200 watts of power to a home or apartment. Not all Marylanders own their roof or can afford a large PV system. Like popular "balcony solar" in Europe, this "plug-in solar" will enable Maryland residents – including those with low incomes and renters – to safely lower their utility bills with sunshine.

Maryland residents want effective and fair climate policies and recognize we need a range of tools to tackle this broad, long-term problem. The policies in the Affordable Solar Act help move Maryland in a good direction. I appreciate your time in reading my testimony and encourage a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB0341.

Respectfully,

Raymond J LeVesque
Howard County District 13 Resident and voter
443-812-4868
levesque.ray2@gmail.com
cc: Senator Guy Guzzone

SB 341 Maryland LCV FAV Affordable Solar Act.pdf
Uploaded by: Rebecca Rehr
Position: FAV

MARYLAND LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

February 19, 2026

Support: SB 341- Affordable Solar Act

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV Supports SB 341, the Affordable Solar Act, and we thank Senator Brooks for his leadership on this issue.

Families and businesses across the state are facing rising electricity costs, and the state must act now to secure reliable, affordable power while protecting public health and our environment. SB 341 offers one pragmatic and equitable pathway to expand clean energy deployment, stabilize utility bills, and strengthen Maryland's economy. The bill updates Maryland's solar energy policy by allowing residents to use portable solar systems, reforming how solar energy and solar renewable energy credits count toward the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard, directing Alternative Compliance Payments (ACPs) into dedicated escrow accounts, and requiring the Public Service Commission to oversee competitive procurements of solar projects and utility credit purchases. These measures stand to considerably strengthen solar deployment and lower energy costs.

Maryland is on an energy grid operated by PJM, whose market structures and interconnection delays have slowed the development of new clean energy resources, undermined progress towards the state's climate goals, and placed upward pressure on utility bills. At the same time, Maryland's current incentive structure for clean energy is no longer functioning as intended. The Renewable Energy Credit (REC) system was designed to spur in-state development while protecting customers through ACP caps, yet utilities increasingly pay ACPs rather than contracting with new projects. As a result, ratepayer dollars are not being efficiently invested in the construction of the clean energy resources Maryland urgently needs.

SB 341 directly responds to these challenges by modernizing Maryland's solar policies to prioritize rapid in-state development while ensuring that ratepayer funds are used to build clean energy. In-state solar remains among the fastest and most cost-effective resources to deploy, and expanding Maryland-based generation is one of the most effective ways to address affordability and reliability concerns.

30 West Street, Suite C
Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-280-9855

www.mdlcv.org

The Affordable Solar Act centers ratepayer protections by ensuring the benefits of clean energy flow directly to Maryland households. By reforming how solar credits are structured and procured and redirecting ACPs to an escrow account to directly benefit ratepayers, SB 341 promotes lower bills, greater price certainty, and more effective investment of ratepayer dollars in new clean energy projects. By authorizing a PSC-led procurement process for distributed solar generation, the state will gain more control over renewable energy deployment. The bill also creates new classes of Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SREC-II) and authorizes PSC established competitive procurements for both SREC and SREC-IIs. This competitive solicitation process will allow for a better alignment with today's market conditions and Maryland's long-term policy goals, capping ratepayer exposure while driving actual project development rather than continued reliance on ACP payments. Lastly, the bill expands access to solar by authorizing residential portable systems, allowing households that are usually shut out of rooftop solar, such as renters and multifamily residents, to participate in clean energy. Because the power produced by portable solar is consumed directly in the unit and does not require traditional net metering, it can help power individual bills without associated administrative costs.

Electricity generation remains a major driver of greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthening Maryland's solar incentive framework is essential to maintaining progress toward the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard and long-term climate commitments. By accelerating in-state deployment, correcting broken market mechanisms, and centering ratepayer protections, SB 341 positions Maryland to remain a national leader in clean energy while delivering tangible benefits to families and businesses across the state.

Maryland LCV is working to Power Maryland Forward, supporting **energy affordability** through **deployment of solar and storage, defense against more fossil fuels** and **unchecked utility profits**, while **getting the most out of the electricity grid we have**. Maryland LCV urges a favorable report on SB 341 as part of this framework.

SB341_FAV_Detchon.pdf
Uploaded by: Reid Detchon
Position: FAV

SB 341 - SUPPORT

Reid Detchon
E-mail: reid.detchon@gmail.com
Mobile phone: 202-446-7589

SB 341 SUPPORT

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (A□ordable Solar Act)

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
February 19, 2026

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

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 341, the Affordable Solar Act, because I want to give ordinary citizens in Maryland more tools to lower their electricity bills and more ways to access clean renewable energy for their homes.

I am a confessed energy nerd – a retired private citizen in Bethesda, a customer of Pepco, and a former official in the U.S. Department of Energy, where I served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Conservation and Renewable Energy from 1989 to 1993.

We are hearing a lot these days about energy affordability, but energy policy is a complex topic that involves many overlapping levels of government and seemingly defies easy solution. Some answers are clear, though – like giving people the right to buy off-the-shelf solar panels that they can plug right into the wall, reducing the amount of power they are buying from their utility. To gather sunlight, the panels can go on an apartment balcony or a deck or in a yard or driveway. Because they deliver such a small amount of electricity compared to the overall power system, they don't disrupt utility operations – and utilities shouldn't be able to demand paperwork or payment. The average payback time for a system purchased today is about five years.

Sound radical? All you need to know about these small-scale systems is that **libertarian Utah** was the first state to pass a law to cut out the red tape and make it easy for consumers to buy and use them. It's time for Maryland to catch up.

The Affordable Solar Act does that and more. It also aligns the state's renewable energy credit system with its original goals – to get more solar power built in Maryland. Right now, utilities that fail to keep up with the Renewable Power Standard simply pay a fee – using

ratepayer funds. These Alternative Compliance Payments are piling up in the Strategic Energy Investment Fund and are being raided for other purposes. Gov. Moore's proposed budget would siphon off $292 million to plug gaps in the general fund. Instead of an incentive to build more solar, the funds are becoming an indirect state tax increase.

With no additional cost to ratepayers, and drawing on a proven model from New Jersey, the Affordable Solar Act will use the Alternative Compliance Payments instead to incentivize construction of new solar systems amounting to **4,000 MW** by 2035 – at residential and commercial properties, as well as utility-scale and community solar systems. It's a smart way to put our money where it will do the most good in building up Maryland's solar capacity – the intent of the Renewable Power Standard in the first place.

I urge a favorable report on SB 341.

SB0341 Affordable Solar Favorable Kranz 2-19-26.p
Uploaded by: Rhonda Kranz
Position: FAV

Testimony on: SB0341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act) Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment
Submitting: Rhonda Kranz
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members:

Thank you for accepting my written testimony in support of SB0341, the Affordable Solar Act. . I have lived in Maryland for 30 years and am very concerned that Maryland meets it climate goals under the Climate Solutions Now Act and addresses energy affordability especially for those with low incomes.

Maryland is facing an affordability crisis, as utility bills continue to rise at a greater rate than inflation, with the burden falling especially hard on working class families. Concurrently, the Trump administration continues its assault on the lowest cost and fastest to develop sources of new electricity generation - solar energy and windpower.

SB0341 directly addresses each of these issues, by making it easier and more cost-effective for residents in the state to utilize solar energy to reduce their utility bills for decades to come, and incentivizing new commercial and utility-scale generation that will increase reliability, lower the wholesale cost of electricity in the region, and delay the need for expensive new transmission capacity in the state.

SB0341 also ensures that our labor force earns good paying wages for building out our clean energy future. Get us back on track to fulfil the goals of the Climate Solutions Now Act. And will cut back on rising utility bills, helping our most vulnerable residents and working families with greater energy affordability.

For these reasons, I support SB0265 and urge a FAVORABLE report in Committee.

Testimony in support of SB0341 - Affordable Solar

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0341_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

02/19/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0341 – FAVORABLE

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0341, Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

As reported by the Solar Energy Industries Association: [1]

> On July 4, President Trump signed the "One Big Beautiful Bill." The bill makes steep cuts to solar energy and places new restrictions on energy tax credits that will slow the deployment of residential and utility-scale solar while undermining the growth of U.S. manufacturing.

Third Way has declared: [2]

> Less than a year into his second term, the Trump Administration has launched a series of policy and regulatory attacks on American clean energy. …federal actions that directly or indirectly harm the solar and wind industries in particular. Through executive orders, agency rulemakings, and administrative decisions, these actions demonstrate a coordinated effort to systematically target renewable energy projects.

This bill declares Maryland's opposition to favoring polluting fossil fuels over clean energy solutions. It attempts to restore the balance destroyed by federal actions. The bill will meet Maryland's goals by authorizing the purchase, installation, and use of a certain portable solar energy generating system for certain purposes; altering the renewable energy portfolio standard; requiring that certain alternative compliance fees be paid into a certain escrow account rather than into the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund; requiring the Public Service Commission to require electric companies to procure a certain number of SRECs and SREC-IIs; requiring the Commission to issue certain solicitations; etc.

Maryland must continue its progress towards the use of renewable energy sources.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB0341.

[1] https://seia.org/research-resources/clean-energy-provisions-big-beautiful-bill/
[2] https://www.thirdway.org/memo/trumps-war-on-solar-wind-a-timeline-of-recent-federal-actions

SB 341 IBEW 24 Support.pdf
Uploaded by: Rico Albacarys
Position: FAV

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

AFFILIATED WITH:
Baltimore-D.C. Metro Building Trades Council - AFL-CIO
Baltimore Port Council
Baltimore Metro Council - AFL-CIO
Central MD Labor Council - AFL-CIO
Del-Mar-Va Labor Council - AFL-CIO
Maryland State - D.C. - AFL-CIO
National Safety Council

JONATHAN P. MCLAUGHLIN, President
CARMEN F. VOSO, Recording Secretary
JEROME T. MILLER, Financial Secretary
MICHAEL J. MCHALE, Business Manager

OFFICE:
2701 W. PATAPSCO AVENUE
SUITE 200

AFL-CI0-CLC

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

Phone: 410-247-5511
FAX: 410-536-4338

Written Testimony of
Rico Albacarys, Assistant Business Agent, IBEW LOCAL 24
Before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee On
SB 341 Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Favorable

February 17, 2026

Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

My name is Rico Albacarys, and I am a member and employee of IBEW Local 24, writing in support of the Affordable Solar Act. This legislation will expand solar energy in Maryland while delivering real benefits for working families.

As Maryland's solar industry grows, so will job opportunities in the clean energy economy. Solar projects require skilled tradespeople to build, interconnect, and maintain these systems safely and reliably. When done right, this work supports family-sustaining careers, registered apprenticeship programs, and long-term job growth across the state. By tying solar expansion to responsible development practices, we can ensure that the clean energy transition creates high-quality, local jobs rather than a race to the bottom.

Investing in our local workforce is just as important as investing in clean energy generation. The Affordable Solar Act moves Maryland toward that balanced approach by promoting solar growth in a way that creates middle class jobs and protects ratepayers.

We urge the Committee to support SB 341 as a forward-looking policy that strengthens our clean energy future while expanding economic opportunity for Maryland workers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rico Albacarys
Assistant Business Agent
IBEW Local 24

testimony on Senate Bill 0341.pdf
Uploaded by: Robert Loube
Position: FAV

SB0341-Support
Robert Loube
bobloube@earthlink.net
240-393-0259

SB0341

Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits

(Affordable Solar Act)

Education Energy and Transportation

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

My name is Robert Loube. I live in Maryland legislative district 19. I am writing in support of SB 0341.

In 2021, taking advantage of existing federal tax credits, I was able to place 30 solar panels on my roof. Over the summer of 2025 I sold more electricity to PEPCO than I bought from it, even though I charged my electric vehicle at my house. I paid no kilowatt hour charges in the summer and had credits left over to reduce my November and December electricity bills.

However, the legislative and regulatory environments have substantially changed since 2021. The big bad ugly law has eliminated federal tax credits for residential customers and others. The US Environmental Protection Agency has declared that green house gases are not a threat to our health and the environment, and the Defense Department is required to purchase electricity from coal fired generators. These changes in federal policy make it imperative that Maryland establish a state system to encourage investment in solar facilities and that is exactly what the Affordable Solar Act will do.

First, the Affordable Solar Act provides a path for individuals and households living in apartments to invest in solar through the balcony solar initiative. Under this section of the Act, apartment dwellers will be able to hang solar panels from their balconies without interference from utilities as long as they meet Underwriters Laboratory standards.

Second, the Affordable Solar Act requires that 2,000 MW of industrial scale solar be constructed in Maryland. Industrial scale solar is the cheapest way to generate electricity,

much cheaper than natural gas or nuclear facilities. [1] Moreover, industrial scale solar can be in place before 2030 while natural gas and nuclear facilities cannot begin to generate electricity until many years into the future. In addition, industrial scale solar facilities combined with batteries are just as reliable as natural gas facilities.[2] Because industrial scale solar with batteries is reliable, investment in these facilities will increase the supply of reliable capacity and therefore reduce the price of capacity in the PJM capacity market.

Third, the Affordable Solar Act requires that 2,000 MW of distributed solar be constructed in Maryland. Most of this investment will be "Behind the Meter" solar on residential homes and commercial buildings. Behind the meter solar will reduce the demand for electricity that is generated by large power plants and shipped to Maryland via interstate transmission lines. In this way, it will reduce Maryland's dependence on PJM and protect Maryland consumers from the duplicity of PJM's rules and the impacts of large data centers on electricity rates. Furthermore, because PJM allocates capacity and transmission costs on the basis of relative peak demand, behind the meter solar, by reducing Maryland's peak demand, will reduce the amount of revenue flowing from Maryland consumers to PJM vested interests.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Thank you for your consideration.

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[1] lazards-lcoeplus-june-2025.pdf

[2] PJM. "December 2023 Effective Load Carrying Capability (ELCC) Report. Available at: elcc-report-december-2023.ashx.

SB 341_Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home_FAV.
Uploaded by: Robert Simon
Position: FAV

Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home

Responding to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

Hearing before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
February 19, 2026

Statement of Support (FAVORABLE)
of Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home on
SB 341, Affordable Solar Act

Maryland Catholics for Our Common Home (MCCH) is a lay-led organization of Catholics from parishes in the three Catholic dioceses in Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington. It engages in education about, and advocacy based upon, the teachings of the Catholic Church relating to care for creation and respect for all life. MCCH is a grassroots voice for the understanding of Catholic social teaching held by a wide array of Maryland Catholics. In the 2025 Legislative Session, over 700 Maryland Catholics from 45 different Catholic parishes and religious communities across the State joined together through MCCH to support several key environmental bills under consideration by the General Assembly. MCCH is independent, though, and should be distinguished as an organization from the Maryland Catholic Conference, which represents the public policy positions of the bishops who lead these three dioceses.

Because we are attuned both to the cry of a distressed Earth and the cry of the poor who suffer first and foremost from a warming planet, **MCCH would like to express its strong support for the passage of Senate Bill 341, the Affordable Solar Act.**

As Catholics, we are guided by the teachings of Pope Leo XIV, Pope Francis, and their predecessors, which have given priority to (1) care for Earth's environment, (2) concern for the economic burdens experienced by the poor, and (3) protection for the workers whose labor is essential to building our energy future.

- In his 2015 encyclical, entitled *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*,[1] Pope Francis called for a comprehensive response to the threats from climate change, including especially "an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced (by) substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy." (*Laudato Si'*, no. 26)
- In his 2023 apostolic exhortation on the climate crisis, *Laudate Deum*[2]—a follow-up to *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis sounds an even more urgent cry to do much more about reducing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. "I have realized that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point. In addition to this possibility, it is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many

[1] The English text of the encyclical, to which the paragraph numbers in the parentheses refer, can be found at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.
[2] The English text of this apostolic exhortation, to which the paragraph numbers in the parentheses refer, can be found at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html.

persons. We will feel its effects in the areas of healthcare, sources of employment, access to resources, housing, and forced migrations." (*Laudate Deum,* no. 2)

- Pope Leo XIV has continued the emphases placed on environmental stewardship by Pope Francis, calling on us to shift "from environmental discourse to an ecological conversion that transforms both personal and communal lifestyles."[3]

We are moving too slowly in Maryland, where we have the power to make choices to support truly clean and renewable energy. Emergent technologies, such as portable solar power devices, open new possibilities for utilization of solar energy by low- and moderate-income residents of apartment complexes. Our state regulations need to be updated to allow these devices to be sold and installed in Maryland. Further, aspects of Maryland's current solar energy incentive program need to be changed, so that utility-scale solar projects are built with the best value for ratepayers, and that distributed and community solar projects receive incentive prices that enable their construction. The goal should be to have a system in which each type of solar power project receives enough of an economic incentive to be built, but that no sector receives more incentives than are necessary. This would be important as excessive utility costs disproportionately impact low- and moderate-income Marylanders. Finally, workers in Maryland who labor on projects to build and maintain our energy infrastructure deserve fair wages and benefits, in keeping with Catholic social teaching that:

> All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions as well as to organize and join unions or other associations.[4]

The Affordable Solar Act is responsive to all of these concerns and provides a path forward to promoting faster deployment of cost-effective solar power in Maryland. It will enable new energy solutions at both distributed scale (e.g., rooftop solar) and utility scale that will serve Maryland's electricity demands economically. The Affordable Solar Act will also provide important protection for labor to ensure that Maryland's workers on utility-scale solar projects receive fair wages and benefits for their work in building a sound energy future.

For these reasons we strongly urge your support for this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our views and our respectful request for a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 341, the Affordable Solar Act.

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[3] "Address of The Holy Father Leo XIV to the Participants in the 'Raising Hope' Conference on the Tenth Anniversary of the Encyclical Laudato Si'," 1 October 2025, available at https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/speeches/2025/october/documents/20251001-conferenza-mariapoli.html.

[4] United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "A Catholic Framework for Economic Life" (2015), no. 5, available at https://www.usccb.org/resources/catholic-framework-economic-life-0.

SB0341 Affordable Solar Act- SUPPORT - Google Docs

Uploaded by: Robert Wald

Position: FAV

SB0341 - SUPPORT

Robert Wald and Pamela Steele
Silver Spring, MD 20902
District 18
rwald1729@verizon.net
301-326-5181

SB0341 -
Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Education, Energy, and the Environment
February 19th, 2025

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

We urge a favorable report on SB0341, Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act). We believe SB0341 establishes the foundation Marylanders need to join the clean, affordable, and urgent energy transition our times demand.

We are some of the lucky ones. We have solar panels on the roof of our Silver Spring home, so we are partially shielded from skyrocketing energy bills. But many other households in Maryland are taking a big hit. They either can't afford to put solar panels on their roof, don't own their homes, or live in an apartment. They're stuck paying higher bills or forgoing heat in the winter and air conditioning in the summer, or cutting back on other essentials.

The portable solar provisions of this bill open the door to renters to participate in the clean energy economy and to meaningful, long-term savings—up to 30% on apartment utility bills.

Furthermore, Maryland needs to generate more electricity within its borders, and it needs to increase its electricity production from renewable sources to meet its goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030. Using the sun to generate that electricity is the cheapest and fastest way to meet our energy needs. This legislation will guarantee that ratepayer money for solar actually builds more solar in the state, rather than used for grant-making or general government functions, as is now the case.

In addition, there are few ways states can push back against the Trump regime. One way is to build out more solar energy, something the President despises.

In short, SB0341 is a bill focused on affordability and boosting our energy supply, with the added benefit of being an act of independence from and resistance to the incompetence and criminality of the Trump administration.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Thank you for your consideration.

CHESSA - Affordable Solar Act One Pager.pdf
Uploaded by: Robin Dutta
Position: FAV

FACT SHEET

Affordable Solar Act

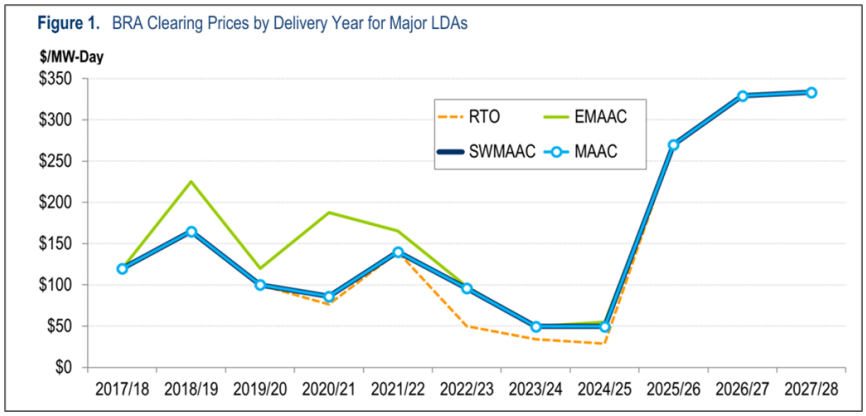
HB345 Charkoudian SB341 Brooks

Creating More Affordable Maryland Energy When Marylanders Need It the Most

New Solar/Storage Rapid Deployment Programs in Affordable Solar Act:

- **New Local Solar:** A new program designed to deploy at least 2 GW of new distributed solar, such as residential, commercial rooftop and parking canopies, and community solar, by 2035. This would speed up current rates of local solar adoption with lower ratepayer costs and exposure.
  Outcome: Increases Maryland energy generation and decreases net demand and grid strain
- **New Large-Scale Solar:** A new competitive procurement to add at least 2 GW of Maryland solar to the grid by 2035. This would speed up current rates of large-scale solar construction.
  Outcome: Increase Maryland energy generation

Not Enough Maryland Generation = Increasing Energy Prices

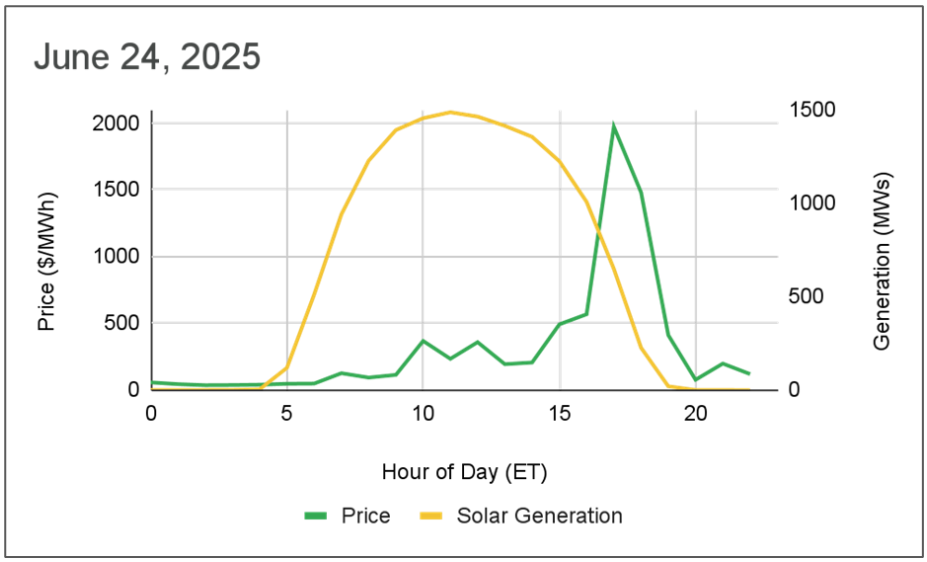


- ◊ **Importing Electricity:** Maryland relies on the PJM Interconnection to acquire most of its energy via capacity auctions. The latest auctions, from PJM's 2027/28 Base Residual Auction Report, shows the price spikes.
- ◊ **Rising Electricity Demand:** The latest PSC's 10-Year Plan for Electric Companies shows Maryland electricity demand set to increase by 2.3 percent annually, revised up from 1.2 percent
- ◊ **Econ 101 — Supply & Demand:** Without producing more energy in Maryland during peak, high demand times, Maryland is on track for even higher electricity prices.

The Affordable Solar Act would leverage private capital and to deploy new, firm clean energy capacity in Maryland— creating downward pressure on electricity prices and lowering RPS costs.

Have questions? Robin K. Dutta, Executive Director
robin@chessa.org
Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association (CHESSA)

Solar and Storage Keep Costs Managed



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

The grid grows as the size of peak demand grows. Reduce peak demand and grid strain, and the pressure to import expensive power and overbuild the grid with extra power lines goes down. The necessary demand in capacity auctions also goes down.

50 MW solar	→	$7 million/yr avoided capacity costs for utilities
2,628 MW in-state solar	→	$28-40 million/yr estimated reduced grid costs
2,628 MW solar + 4-hr storage pairing	→	$183 million/yr potential reduced grid costs

Source: Witness Aloo, Case No. 9820 and PJM's ELCC Class Ratings for the 2026/27 Base Residual Auction and analysis of public utility data by Align Energy Advisors

Technologies such as rooftop solar, paired battery storage, energy efficiency can create the same resource adequacy benefits as a natural gas plant at 40-60% of the cost. (Source: The Brattle Group)

Large-scale solar is now the cheapest forms of new power generation. (Source: Lazard)

The Affordable Solar Act would leverage private capital and to deploy new, firm clean energy capacity in Maryland— creating downward pressure on electricity prices and lowering RPS costs.

Have questions? Robin K. Dutta robin@chessa.org Executive Director Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association (CHESSA)

CHESSA - EEE SB341 Affordable Solar Act FAV 202602

Uploaded by: Robin Dutta

Position: FAV

16 February 2026

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

Oral and Written Testimony
SB341: Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Position: Favorable

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify favorably on SB 341, the Affordable Solar Act.

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.

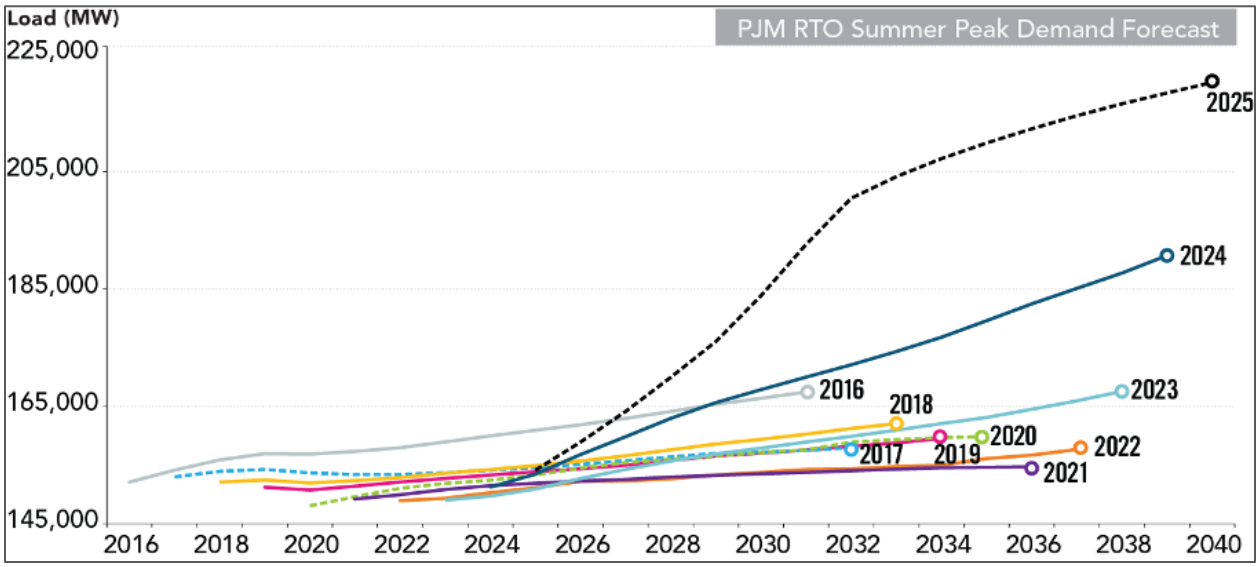
I am here to provide favorable testimony on SB341, the Affordable Solar Act. This bill is laser focused on helping Maryland consumers avoid energy cost increases by increasing Maryland clean energy generation, reducing the need to overbuild the electric grid, creating downward pressure on Maryland energy prices, and side-stepping the problems in the PJM Interconnection in the process. The major sections of the bill will help with this by creating:

- A new distributed solar program to install at least 2 GW of new capacity on the Maryland distribution grid
- A new large-scale solar procurement to install at least 2 GW of new wholesale energy capacity in Maryland

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, The Affordable Grid Act will lower the cost of the Renewable Portfolio Standard, keep the flow of new solar being deployed, and help Maryland avoid the high costs coming from PJM. And, in light of the repeal of the Federal Investment Tax Credit, it will create long-term business certainty for companies, signaling that Maryland is where solar companies should be doing business.

The Problem: The Increasing Energy Deficit Makes Prices Go Up

Marylanders are becoming much more sensitive to grid disruptions and electric price spikes. Electric demand is increasing. And there is already straining in its electric system. Maryland only generates about 60 percent of the electric generation it demands[1]. But importing electricity isn't an automatic solution because of the cost of new transmission and grid infrastructure that would be borne by the ratepayer. Nine of the 13 states in the PJM Interconnection (where Maryland resides) also must import electricity to serve their electric demand. There's growing demand and competition for an energy supply that needs to increase.



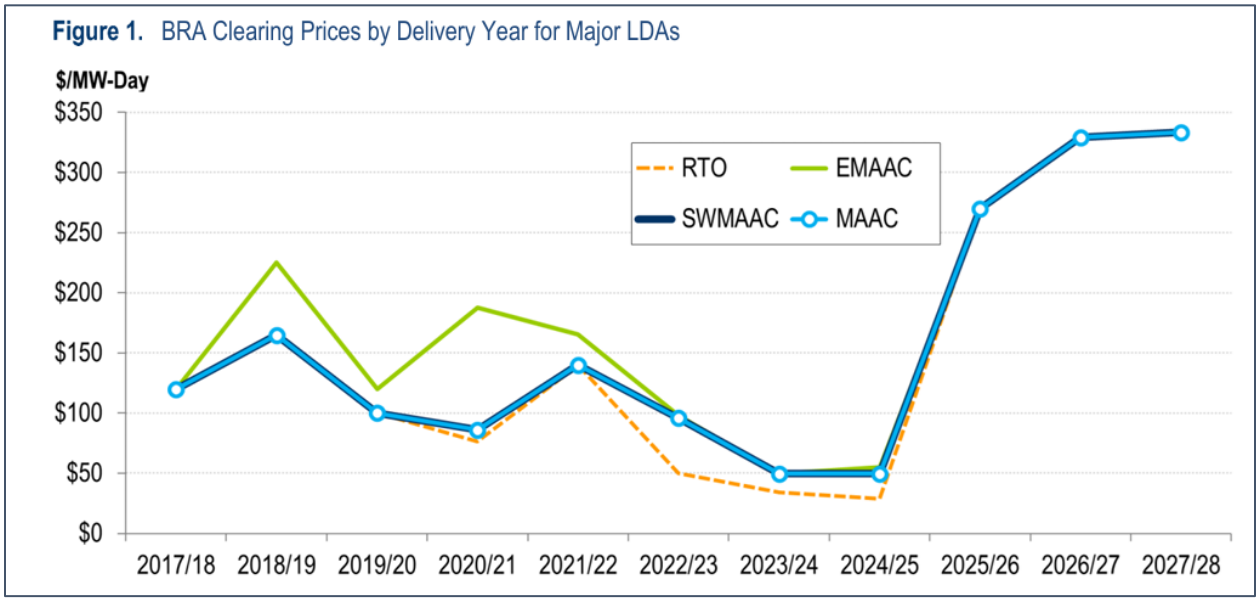
Source: Summer 2025 PJM Reliability Assessment

A January 2025 report from the U.S. Department of Energy shows that projected peak demand growth is only increasing, with electricity supply and demand data from the North American Energy Reliability Council showing the estimates being revised upwards each year since 2022.[2] If Maryland's electric future follows the projected national trend, it needs to step up the clean energy build-out throughout the state at the same time as handling fossil fuel retirements. Maryland has been experiencing energy inflation without demanding more electricity, but that is about to change. To prevent the problem from getting worse, scaling up statewide solar adoption of all kinds, needs to happen as soon as possible.

Layering on the problem are the faults within the PJM Interconnection, both with their capacity markets and their interconnection processes. 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

[1] https://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.php?sid=MD
[2] U.S. Department of Energy. "Pathways to Commercial Liftoff: Virtual Power Plants 2025 Update". January 2025. p.7

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 that there was not enough generation relative to the demand for electricity. As of today, there will be no ceiling price in the next capacity auction and the same supply dynamics.



Source: PJM 2027/28 Base Residual Auction Report

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 2024[3]. That revision nearly doubles Maryland's anticipated annual load growth.

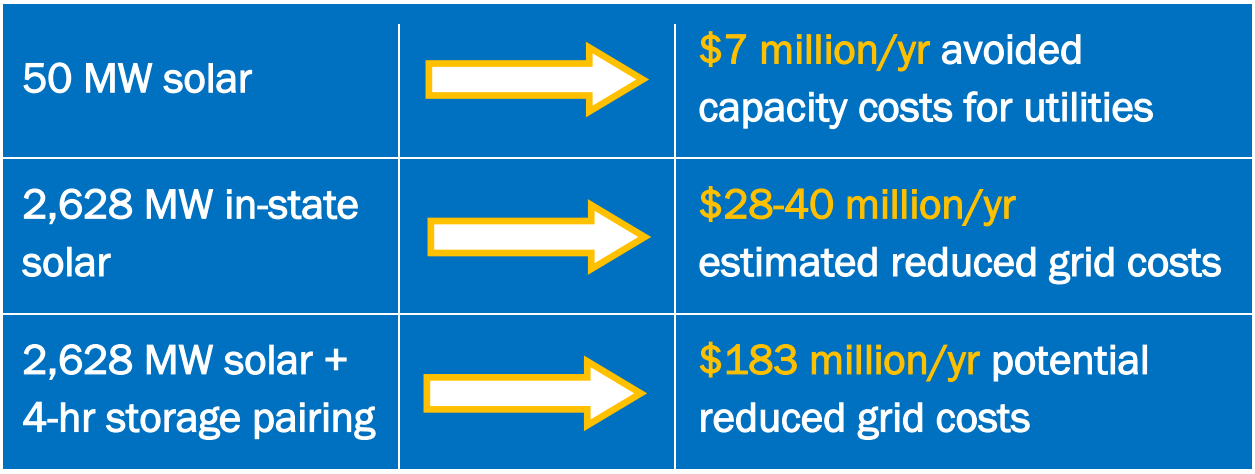
The Solution: More Maryland Solar Means Fewer PJM Problems

Firm capacity and generation to be relied upon does not have to come from incumbent generation technologies, such as coal, natural gas, or nuclear energy. Solar and wind technologies are ready to scale up at an increasing rate, when part of a portfolio that includes battery storage, to provide firm, reliable generation when consumers need it. And currently, solar and storage are the new generation coming online in Maryland.

For starters, large-scale solar and land-based wind now represent the cheapest new electric generating sources in the United States, according to the firm Lazard. New clean energy generation can be built and energized to generate when electricity demand is greatest during the day. When building portfolios of energy storage, those cheap solar and wind facilities can charge those assets to be used day or night.

[3] Maryland Energy Administration. "Reaching 100 Percent Net Carbon-Free Electricity in Maryland". January 2025. p.19

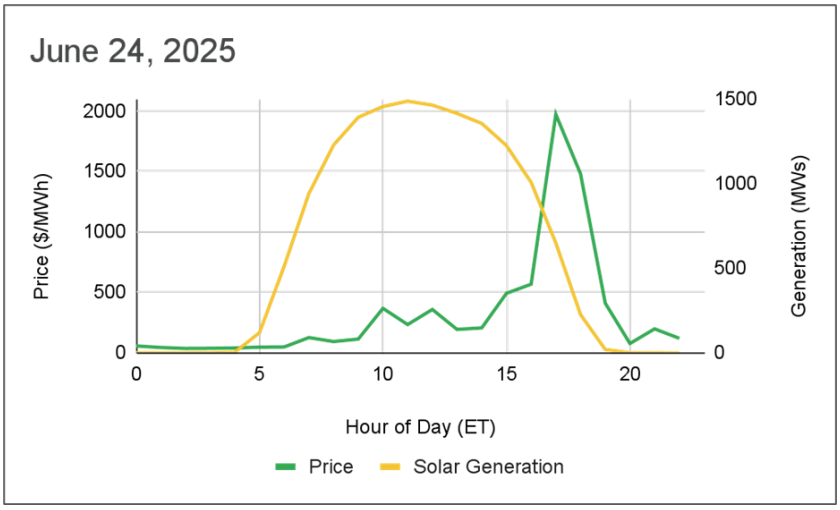
The data shows that distributed solar and storage strategies are scalable and help the electric grid. According to a study from the independent consulting firm The Brattle Group, distributed resources, which include a range of advanced energy technologies (such as local solar, storage, smart appliances, internet-connected thermostats, and energy management software) provide the *same* resource adequacy as a natural gas plant at 40-60 percent lower cost. The firm Deloitte analyzed the benefits that distributed energy resources including rooftop solar could deploy throughout local distribution grids in a 2024 report. Their conclusion was that scaling up the deployment and adoption of residential solar and related distributed resources would contribute to improved resiliency, reliability, and resource adequacy.



Source: Witness Aloo, Case No. 9820 and PJM's ELCC Class Ratings for the 2026/27 Base Residual Auction and analysis of public utility data by Align Energy Advisors

The figure above highlights what benefits distributed solar provides Maryland today, as well as what it could provide. More solar should be paired with storage, and more solar means more ability to lower peak demand for all utility territories. As the PJM Base Residual Auction clearing price increases, distributed solar becomes more valuable for reducing Maryland's exposure to those high-price auctions.

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.



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

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 off sets 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.

The Solution: Build More Firm, Clean Energy Resources in Maryland Despite PJM

The Affordable Solar Act is designed to increase in-state solar generation and relieve grid congestion by unlocking deployment potential for Maryland solar and storage assets that either do not need PJM approval or are in economic limbo after receiving PJM interconnection approval.

This legislation leverages nearly 20 years of Maryland investment in solar energy through the Renewable Portfolio Standard, and the federal policy investments mostly through the Investment Tax Credit. According to a 2021 National Renewable Energy Laboratories (NREL) study, residential rooftop, commercial rooftop, and large-scale solar systems achieved cost reductions of 64, 69, and 82 percent, respectively, since 2010. And, in the last ten years, as measured by

the Solar Energy Industries Association and the research firm WoodMackenzie, solar costs have declined by nearly 40 percent[4].

By creating deploy-first solar programs, the Affordable Solar Act recognizes the massive cost declines in the solar industry and tackling head-on the generation shortfall in Maryland:

New Distributed Solar. The Affordable Solar Act proposes creating a new distributed solar program that calibrates incentives based on different market segments and project types. It pre-sets them to make financing these projects easier and cheaper. This new program locks in the incentive through administrative action, which will mean that ratepayer dollars are used more efficiently. And it empowers the Public Service Commission to modify values if there are significant changes in economic conditions (ie. supply chain or labor disruptions) or federal policy (ie. tariffs, repeal of Solar Investment Tax Credit). They can adjust incentive levels accordingly without requiring subsequent legislative approvals.

Under this new program, funding for the Renewable Portfolio Standard would only go to projects that are online and generating. For the solar programs, that would mean only Maryland solar projects generating electricity would be receiving any support from the program.

If passed, there would be at least 2 GW of new distributed solar in Maryland, helping to meet growing energy demand and improve the grid so it costs less for all Maryland residents.

New Large-Scale Solar Procurement. This legislation would also create new competitive procurements starting right away for large-scale solar, creating a pathway for mature and ready-to-build utility-scale solar projects to lock in financing, get built, and then energized in Maryland's grid. There are already over 900 MW of Maryland-sited solar plus storage projects in the PJM queue. By creating a clear procurement pathway, the Maryland PSC can create an onramp from the PJM interconnection queue for newly approved projects to quickly secure financing and move into the construction phase. This competitive process also allows for the prospect that if there are changes to federal clean energy policies (ie. tariffs, repealing the Investment Tax Credit), they can automatically be account for.

In the near-term, the procurement can enable mature and ready-to-build solar projects can be built throughout Maryland. In the longer term, when the PJM interconnection process is approving new projects, there will be a pipeline of ready-to-build projects ready to participate in this procurement process. And by 2035, there can be at least 2 Gigawatts of new large-scale solar in Maryland, serving Maryland's consumers, and reducing the need for importing electricity.

[4] SEIA/Wood Mackenzie Power & Renewables U.S. Solar Market Insight Q4 2024. https://seia.org/research-resources/solar-industry-research-data/#:~:text=The%20cost%20to%20install%20solar,deploy%20thousands%20of%20systems%20nationwide.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Affordable Solar Act is designed to deploy new solar in Maryland, leveraging private capital, avoiding fully funded ratepayer projects, avoiding unnecessary transmission expansion projects, and creating downward pressure on energy costs for Maryland consumers. It will make sure that dollars in the Renewable Portfolio Standard only supports new generation systems that produce energy. It has the added benefit of helping meet Maryland's decarbonization goals, which shows that clean energy has matured to the point where it can solve today's grid issues and contribute to environmental solutions.

CHESSA urges a favorable report on SB341.

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

Sincerely,

Robin K. Dutta

Robin K. Dutta
Executive Director
Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association
robin@chessa.org

Solar testimony SB0431 Shea.pdf
Uploaded by: Shannon Shea
Position: FAV

SB0341 - SUPPORT

Shannon Shea

Shannonbshea@gmail.com

518-859-4230

Rockville, MD District 17

SB0341

Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits

(Affordable Solar Act)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

February 10th, 2025

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

As a parent and resident of Rockville, Maryland who is concerned about my children's future and the future of everyone in this state, I urge a favorable report on SB0341, Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act).

Marylanders deserve clean, affordable energy, no matter where they live or what their income is. As a coastal state that is already dealing with the impacts of climate change and rising energy bills, it is especially important to support the transition to a clean energy future in every way possible. HB0345 helps set a foundation for that transition and future.

Currently, Maryland families face some of the highest electricity costs in the nation. With the grid needing upgrades and potential pressure from data centers in the region, these costs will keep going up. In contrast, I have seen my electricity bills stay steady because of my use of renewable energy. Between solar panels on my house and buying from a community solar group, I have been able to fulfill nearly all of my electricity bills with solar, including charging our electric car. As a result, my household has not felt this impact nearly as badly as most people. Everyone should have access to these real solutions, not just people who are financially privileged. Our system should protect Maryland residents from both high utility prices and the effects of climate change. This bill creates an escrow account system that ensures transparency and prevents utilities from passing excessive costs to customers. It guarantees that ratepayer money for solar actually goes to support solar rather than getting shifted to irrelevant projects. This approach provides a way to fulfill our urgent need for clean energy while also protesting our families and businesses.

This legislation also makes solar energy accessible to everyone, whether they are renters or owners. A typical balcony system can reduce apartment electricity bills by 10-30%. This bill reduces barriers that have kept solar access out of reach for so many people. I remember when we installed solar panels on our house and the excitement in my son's eyes when I told him we were going to make our own electricity. Everyone should have the chance to experience the power that comes from knowing that you can take electricity generation into your own hands and contribute to a clean energy future.

Lastly, this bill offers a real step forward in addressing the crisis being created by climate change and meeting Maryland's renewable energy goals. Our state deserves to be independent of reliance on coal, natural gas, and oil. Moving this bill forward would make real progress on that goal.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB0341.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Shannon Shea

Maryland Written Testimony 2_10 (2).pdf
Uploaded by: Skye Richmond
Position: FAV

SB0341 - SUPPORT

Skye Richmond
Bright Saver
skye@brightsaver.org

SB0341 - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

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

My name is Skye Richmond representing Bright Saver, a non-profit dedicated to building a plug-in solar movement in the US, making solar ownership affordable and accessible to everyone. I am testifying to encourage the Committee to support SB0341 to allow the people of Maryland to have greater access to the benefits of solar PV systems and to save money by reducing their electricity bills.

Maryland is ready to lead on clean energy, and Marylanders are ready for change. We believe that Maryland families deserve real solutions that give us control over our energy future, not just more expensive bills. Plug-in solar provides meaningful access for renters and apartment residents. According to 2020 Census data, approximately 32% of housing units in Maryland are occupied by renters. We believe energy independence should be available to all Marylanders, not just those who own homes, and this bill breaks down such barriers that have kept solar access out of reach.

Plug-in solar reduces electricity bills and improves energy resilience. By directly supplying power to household appliances, these systems reduce the amount of electricity households must purchase from utilities. A typical plug in solar system can reduce apartment electricity bills by 10-30%[2].

We support SB0341 as written because it ensures that plug-in solar systems are safe for consumers and for the grid. Systems installed according to safety standards cited in the bill will not:

- Shock users
- Overload circuits or create fire hazards
- Backfeed during a power outage, which protects line workers and anyone working on a multi-unit building

Proven policy models show that exempting small plug-in solar systems from one-size-fits-all interconnection requirements—while maintaining clear safety standards—can significantly reduce costs and accelerate clean energy adoption without shifting costs to utilities or other

ratepayers. For instance, in Utah SB0341 passed unanimously last year and this year, more than 25 states are moving plug-in solar legislation across the political spectrum.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB0341 and support legislation that expands access to affordable, scalable clean energy solutions.

Thank you for your consideration.

[1] Maryland Matters, "Energy bills likely to tick up again in 2026 after electricity auction clears at maximum price," (July 2025)
https://marylandmatters.org/2025/07/23/energy-bills-likely-to-tick-up-again-in-2026-after-electricity-auction-clears -at-maximum-price/
[2] Solar Tech Online, "Solar Panels For Apartment Balconies: Complete 2025 Installation Guide," (August 2025)
https://solartechonline.com/blog/solar-panels-apartment-balcony-guide/

SB0341_Cheston_FAV.pdf
Uploaded by: Susan Cheston
Position: FAV

SB0341 - SUPPORT

Susy Cheston
7117 Sycamore Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
Volunteer with the **Chesapeake Climate Action Network** (CCAN)

SB0341- Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits

(Affordable Solar Act)

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

February 17, 2026

As a longtime Maryland resident and a volunteer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN), I urge a FAVORABLE report on SB0341- Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits, the Affordable Solar Act.

Our family raced to add solar panels to our house before the federal tax credits expired at the end of 2025. We had always wanted to add solar, but due to our tree cover and restrictions from living in a historic district, we had not been able to before.

Now, with our federal government pushing us backwards, and in the midst of stunning increases in utility costs, we're doing our part by investing a significant amount of our personal savings in solar. But we're just one family making the small difference we can. We need the state of Maryland to step up and provide leadership to protect and expand renewable energy.

The Affordable Solar Act has a number of elements that I value:

- Providing a path for people living in apartments to invest in portable, plug-in solar panels.
- Requiring that 2,000 MW of industrial scale solar be constructed in Maryland, providing a pathway to cheaper, more reliable electricity that can be in place much faster than other sources.
- Reducing Maryland's dependence on PJM.
- Requiring the Public Service Commission (PSC) to conduct competitive procurements for utility scale solar and ensure that the new systems are built with the best value for rate-payers.

- Ensuring that the Alternative Compliance Payments (ACPs) that have already been paid by rate payers will be put into an escrow account used to implement this new solar model.

For these reasons, I strongly support this bill and urge a **FAVORABLE report on SB0341**.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susy Cheston

Takoma Park 2026 - SB 341 FAV - Affordable Solar A

Uploaded by: Talisha Searcy

Position: FAV

CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

Senate Bill 341 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 19, 2026

SUPPORT

The City of Takoma Park urges a favorable vote on the Affordable Solar Act (SB 341), which advances solar energy generation in Maryland in three ways. First, it streamlines the process for installing portable residential "balcony" solar panels, making solar power more accessible to renters and residents in multifamily buildings. Second, it updates the state's Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program to encourage greater investment in large-scale solar projects. Finally, it establishes a dedicated funding mechanism, ensuring that ratepayer contributions intended for clean energy are effectively utilized to support this initiative.

The City of Takoma Park is home to approximately 18,000 residents and covers 2.4 square miles within Montgomery County. About half of the population owns their homes while the other half rents, representing a diverse range of incomes and building types. Greenhouse gas reduction is a longstanding priority for the City of Takoma Park, with a goal to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.

Transitioning to renewable energy—through both smaller local projects and larger statewide efforts—is essential for Takoma Park to achieve its greenhouse gas reduction and climate action goals. Like many communities in Maryland, Takoma Park is already experiencing the effects and financial burdens of climate change. By improving the statewide SREC program and introducing a dedicated funding source, it will become more practical to meet Maryland's solar energy targets. These changes will help Takoma Park residents and others by increasing access to diverse energy sources, helping stabilize electricity costs, and decreasing dependence on fossil fuels.

Our residents who rent and/or live in multifamily buildings will especially benefit from simplified rules for installing portable small-scale solar panels. Utility bills and energy cost burden continue to rise, most directly affecting many of these same residents.

(over)

Solar power has not been easily available to renters, due in part to complex regulatory requirements. Yet portable home solar can significantly reduce a family's burden of energy costs, and more equitably allow renters (many of whom are both lower income and people of color) access to this energy choice.

SB 341 directly supports several City council priorities, for a sustainable community, quality housing for all, and a more equitable community for all.

Therefore, the City of Takoma Park supports SB 341, and encourages a favorable vote.

City Contact: Talisha Searcy, Mayor
talishas@takomaparkmd.gov

Affordable Solar Act Testimony SB0341 Lake.pdf
Uploaded by: Tim Lake
Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB0341

Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy

Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0341.

This bill would phase out the current solar subsidy program and replace it with a new program that would require the Public Service Commission (PSC) to conduct competitive procurements for utility scale solar and ensure that the new systems are built with the best value for rate-payers. It will also require the PSC to establish incentive prices for rooftop and community solar, and would protect rate payers. Payments that have already been paid by rate payers will be put into an escrow account used to implement this new solar model.

Also, this bill would incentivize portable solar - compact portable systems that plug directly into a standard outlet and require no rooftop installation. Portable solar systems feed power into the home to offset consumption, reducing household electricity bills and, when paired with a battery, offer energy resilience to households. This would help many Marylanders who cannot invest in traditional rooftop solar, particularly renters, lower-income households, and homeowners with shaded or otherwise unsuitable roofs. It would put new, clean energy into the grid and into people's homes. I have a roof that is completely shaded, and allowance of plug-in solar would give me an opportunity to get some solar power into my house.

I strongly support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

Tim Lake

Rockville, Maryland

Written Testimony in Favor of SB341 - Affordable S

Uploaded by: Tom Taylor

Position: FAV

Written Testimony in Support of SB341 - Affordable Solar Act

February 17, 2026

Subject: Written Testimony in Favor of SB341 – Affordable Solar Act

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

I am writing to urge your support for the Affordable Solar Act - SB 341. This legislation is needed to move Maryland towards our goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030. Currently, Maryland is at only 7%.

SB 341 is significant because it will advance solar energy capacity in the state. This bill will make it easier to build solar and ensure that we have clean, reliable, and affordable energy for all residents in the state. It also will increase grid capacity. Important provisions in the legislation include:

-- Creating a dedicated fund for solar energy.

-- Reforming how Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) are procured and priced to incentivize greater generation of solar energy and protect ratepayers. It will ensure that incentives are appropriately tailored to each scale of solar generation – rooftop and community-scale as well as utility scale.

-- Democratizing solar by allowing renters and multi-family unit dwellers to install balcony or plug-in solar. It creates the possibility for renters, and also homeowners whose homes are not suitable for rooftop solar, to generate solar power.

Please give a favorable report on SB341.

Sincerely,

Tom Taylor
11-G Laurel Hill Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-513-9524

SB0341_fav_mascioli.pdf
Uploaded by: William Mascioli
Position: FAV

SB0341 - SUPPORT
William Mascioli
2021 Luzerne Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

B3mascioli@verizon.net
301.404.7490

SB0341–Public Utilities—Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 19, 2026

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

My name is William Mascioli. I have lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, for more than 40 years. I raised my children here. Retired now, I worked for over 35 years as an attorney for the federal government protecting the collective-bargaining rights of workers under the National Labor Relations Act, an edifice of rights built on the foundation of "concerted activity for mutual aid and protection." I was dedicated to that work because that notion of mutual aid and protection is deeply personal for me. I have tried to conduct my life guided by principles of compassion, empathy, and recognition that we are all tied together by threads of obligation and responsibility – to each other as humans, to future generations, and to the natural world that sustains us. For decades now, I have lived with growing anxiety and despair over our reckless and irresponsible failure to deal with the ongoing climate crisis with anything approaching adequacy.

These days, like, I trust, most of us, I am terrified and dismayed by the country's slide into authoritarianism, most immediately evident by the brutal and lawless treatment of members of our community by the agents of ICE and the rest of the deportation apparatus. I have been pleased, proud, and impressed by this legislature's efforts to rein in ICE's abuses. The climate crisis is every bit as threatening to our democracy as Trump's depredations against our national morals. Indeed, the suffering and injustices that it threatens--and the political disruptions that those will entail--cannot be overstated. It warrants *at least* the same level of attention.

Put simply, Maryland needs to act quickly to do its part to combat the climate crisis by moving away from fossil fuels. For that reason, I urge you to issue a favorable report on SB 341, the Affordable Solar Act.

Four years ago, by passing the Climate Solutions Now Act, Maryland set a goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030. SB 341 will take giant strides toward reaching that goal, and does so in a way that increases solar generation within our borders and makes solar energy more widely accessible. Among other things, it: (a) creates a program within the Public Service Commission to develop at least 4,000 megawatts of additional solar energy generating capacity in the state, a massive increase, and (b) authorizes portable plug-in solar, which will make solar

power vastly more available to renters and other apartment dwellers, which will mean significant long-term savings on utility bills.

Furthermore, this legislation will ensure that ratepayer money for solar actually builds more solar in the state, rather than being used for grant-making or general government functions, as is now the case.

At a time when the federal government is doing all that it can to thwart moves toward a cleaner, more equitable energy future, it is imperative that states step to the fore, and SB 341 presents just such an opportunity to Maryland. I urge a favorable report and thank you for your consideration.

SB341_FAVWAMEND_PSC (1).pdf
Uploaded by: Barve Barve
Position: FWA

STATE OF MARYLAND

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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

RE: SB 341 – Favorable with Amendments - Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Public Service Commission (the "Commission") appreciates the opportunity to provide this testimony for SB 341. We understand the bill's sponsor is offering substantial amendments, and with those we offer our support for the legislation.

With the sponsor's amendments, SB 341 offers stability for Maryland's solar development landscape by having the Commission oversee the procurement of Solar Renewable Energy Credits ("SCRECs" and SREC-IIs"). It provides a pathway for additional generation development and helps offset the costs of the new generation through utilization of the alternative compliance payments.

SB 341 fundamentally changes and expands the Commission's and electric utilities' roles with respect to solar development in the State. Currently, the Commission enforces compliance with the Solar Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (Solar RPS) by monitoring and overseeing certain electric utilities and electric suppliers. Today, those utilities and suppliers purchase SRECs to comply with the State's Solar RPS. Under SB 341, the Commission will be tasked to craft and implement two new procurement programs, under which electric utilities will purchase all solar renewable energy credits:

- The Distributed Solar Facilities Incentive program is designed to incentivize the development of new solar generation capacity of at least 2,000 MWs from qualifying distributed systems 5 MWs or smaller. The Commission is tasked to create "blocks" of megawatt capacity on a yearly basis, then solicit and facilitate the utilities' purchase SREC-IIs from a variety of different types of distributed solar facilities. The amended bill will offer guidance to the Commission to ensure the costs of this program are below 5% of an average annual electric bill.

- The Utility-Scale SREC-II program is designed to incentivize the development of at least 2,000 MWs from utility-scale systems larger than 5 MW. The Commission is tasked with creating a competitive solicitation process for these projects.
- The legislation retains the system currently in place for suppliers to purchase solar renewable energy credits for solar systems built prior to the new programs going into effect. It is unclear how this could interact with the new program and the Commission seeks amendments to clarify this. It is our understanding the Bill Sponsor is developing amendments to address this concern.

To facilitate the new purchasing programs, SB 341 establishes a new escrow account. Starting in October 2026, ACPs paid in lieu of required REC purchases under the State's RPS will be paid into the new escrow account. ACPs will no longer be directed to the Strategic Energy Investment Fund ("SEIF"). Additionally, a portion of funds collected under the utility franchise tax and attributable to large users of energy will be directed to the escrow account. These funds will be used to purchase SREC-IIs when the Commission implements the new procurement programs. The escrow account will serve as the platform for the purchase of SREC-IIs under the new program.

SB 341 allows municipal electric companies and electric cooperatives to meet their solar RPS requirements by authorizing the purchase of SREC-IIs through a procurement process established by the Commission. However, these utilities will still have the option to purchase solar credits on their own.

SB 341 requires the Commission, in consultation with the Department of Labor, to develop and adopt regulations regarding labor requirements for utility-scale solar projects that participate in the new procurement program. The Commission currently does not have the labor enforcement or labor law expertise that would be necessary to enforce such regulations, and we look forward to continuing to discuss potential amendments with the bill sponsor and the Department of Labor.

Finally, SB 341 allows for the use of new technology called "portable solar." This is exciting new technology that will enable far more Marylanders to use solar energy to power their homes and businesses.

Senate Bill 341 represents a fundamental restructuring of Maryland's solar landscape. Senate Bill 345 requires the Commission to take on new duties and expand existing duties such as solar forecasting, procurement design and implementation for multiple purchasing schemes, development of new tracking and enforcement tools and processes, overseeing a new solar escrow account, coordination with the Comptroller, Department of Labor, and independent escrow administrator, and enforcement of labor, community benefit, and fraud provisions. Because of the scope and nature of new and expanded duties under the bill, the Commission will need to hire four

full-time personnel, and we will need to contract with at least two consultants to assist with procurement design and implementation.

The Public Service Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony for your consideration for SB 341. We request a favorable report with support for the amendments offered by the sponsor. Please contact Niki Wiggins, Director of Legislative Affairs, at irene.wiggins3@maryland.gov if you have any questions related to this informational testimony.

Sincerely,

Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Maryland Public Service Commission

Solar Landscape Written Testimony SB341.pdf
Uploaded by: David Simins
Position: FWA

601 Bangs Ave, Suite 301
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
O. 844.765.2769
SOLARLANDSCAPE.COM

Chairman Brian Feldman
Chair Brian Feldman
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Feldman,

Solar Landscape supports the goals of SB341 and appreciates the Committee's work to strengthen Maryland's clean energy framework. We respectfully offer the following amendments to ensure the legislation fully aligns with the state's distributed solar objectives. As currently drafted, this legislation will unintentionally damage the ability to deploy certain distributed solar projects in Maryland, including commercial and industrial rooftop solar, brownfields, and landfills. First, this legislation would inadvertently limit the continued effectiveness of the Brighter Tomorrow Small Solar Energy Generating System Incentive Program (SGI),which has been a successful program in the state to incentivize and encourage these types of distributed solar projects that the state has chosen to prioritize, even if the SGI is otherwise extended through legislation that has been introduced this session. Second, this proposed transition will introduce uncertainty around solar project compensation in Maryland, which would temporarily slow financing and commercial and industrial rooftop solar development at a time when the state crucially needs new, fast-to-deploy generation.

Founded in 2012, Solar Landscape is a vertically integrated solar developer and national leader in community solar deployment. We focus on developing community solar projects on commercial and industrial rooftops using a roof-lease model in which we lease the rooftops of large warehouse and storage facilities to host solar installations that deliver power back to the grid through community solar in Maryland.

Maryland is a central part of our portfolio, and our work aligns directly with the state's clean energy and equity priorities. Currently our portfolio consists of 82 projects, 45 of which have energized and are already delivering clean energy to Marylanders. The other 37 projects are currently under development. All our current projects have been awarded funding under the Maryland Energy Administration's Community Solar LMI PPA Grant and are committed to providing at least 51% of energy produced to either low-income or low-to-moderate-income households. Solar Landscape is ranked the #1 Maryland Commercial Solar Contractor, reflecting our sustained investment in the state's community solar program.[1] We remain committed to helping Maryland meet its renewable energy targets and advance energy equity.

Commercial and industrial rooftop solar provides unique and irreplaceable value to Maryland's electric grid. These projects interconnect at the distribution level, meaning they avoid the PJM queue, saving years of delays. These projects face no zoning or siting opposition—they are built on existing infrastructure, located where electricity demand already exists. Unlike any other form of generation available to Maryland, these projects can be developed and constructed in 12 to 24 months. Due to this speed, the Brattle Group found that one gigawatt of commercial and industrial rooftop solar over the next 5 years would save Maryland ratepayers $300 million, in addition to the

[1] Solar Power World, 2025

guaranteed savings for subscribers. Thus, commercial and industrial rooftop community solar is one of the most effective tools Maryland has to meet rising demand, reduce reliance on costly out-of-state power, and deliver immediate ratepayer savings.

In 2024, the General Assembly explicitly recognized the unique value of certain distributed solar projects including commercial and industrial rooftop, brownfield, and landfill projects, through the passage of the Brighter Tomorrow Act and the creation of the Small Solar Energy Generating System Incentive Program (SGI).The SGI allows for the renewable energy credits produced by these projects to have a 150% compliance value for the utilities towards meeting their renewable portfolio standard. The legislature recognized that these projects deliver important system and policy benefits but often face higher development costs and narrower margins than other forms of generation. Through the SGI, the legislature made a clear policy choice to prioritize these eligible distributed solar projects. Legislation has since been introduced this session to extend the Brighter Tomorrow program and expand its capacity, reinforcing the General Assembly's intent to continue scaling these projects.

As drafted SB341 would benefit from clarification to ensure consistency with that policy direction. By transitioning to a new REC structure without clearly preserving the Brighter Tomorrow multiplier for eligible projects, the bill would unintentionally eliminate the incentive structure This change would materially affect project economics and halt development of commercial and industrial rooftop solar and other SGI-eligible resources in Maryland. To this end, we respectfully recommend that the committee amend the legislation to explicitly ensure that the Brighter Tomorrow SGI applies to new SREC IIs.

Separately, the bill's accelerated transition timeline would introduce the new REC structure without clearly defined pricing guardrails. Because commercial and industrial rooftop projects can be developed in less than two years, projects moving forward today would not come online before the bill's proposed effective date. Without predictable pricing, developers and investors will be unable to assess project viability with confidence and will defer investment decisions until greater clarity is provided. To ensure continued development, we encourage the Committee to establish a defined floor for REC pricing for commercial and industrial rooftop solar projects.

These challenges are compounded by broader policy timing. Maryland is approaching the federal Investment Tax Credit sunset, making the next several years a critical window for deploying new, in-state generation while federal support remains available. At the same time, net energy metering reforms are expected this session. Introducing overlapping policy changes without continuity or pricing clarity risks slowing deployment at exactly the moment when speed matters most, leaving cost-effective generation untapped and increasing reliance on higher-cost alternatives.

For these reasons, Solar Landscape supports SB341 with amendments and respectfully asks the Committee to carefully consider the near-term impacts of SB341 on the development of commercial and industrial rooftop solar and other SGI-eligible distributed solar projects. With clear transition safeguards, the bill can strengthen Maryland's renewable energy framework while maintaining momentum for affordable, in-state clean energy to Maryland ratepayers.

SB0341 Comments_SRECTrade.pdf
Uploaded by: Caleb Einwechter
Position: UNF

Senate Bill 341/House Bill 345 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Position: Unfavorable

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and committee members,

We ask that you vote unfavorably on SB 341/HB 345, the Affordable Solar Act. SRECTrade currently manages over 24,000 assets in Maryland and works with over 40 residential and small commercial solar installers. SRECTrade is involved in all aspects of Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) certification, reporting, and transacting. Our dedicated teams work with the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) to certify eligible systems. We also work closely with PJM's Generation Attribute Tracking System (GATS) to ensure systems are reporting correctly.

SB 341/HB 345 seeks to move away from a tradeable SREC market and introduce a new surcharge, new long-term procurements, and new administrative infrastructure when Maryland is now seeing the benefits of the Brighter Tomorrow Act passed by the General Assembly in 2024 (SB 783). This bill would increase complexity with no guarantee of meeting its clean energy goals, protecting ratepayers from rising energy costs, or promoting economic growth in the solar industry.

In addition, SB 341/HB 345 would create significant new financial exposure for Maryland ratepayers by requiring long-term, fixed payments for 4,000 MW of new solar projects without setting a clear cap on total program costs. Because developers are guaranteed 15-year SREC-II revenues regardless of market conditions, risk is shifted away from developers and onto customers. The bill's "5% net bill impact" safeguard is not a firm limit, since it allows projected "benefits" to offset real costs. With the State explicitly exempt from project risk, any cost overruns, price spikes, or procurement errors would fall to ratepayers, compounded by a new non-bypassable surcharge applied to all customers.

The bill proposes a new distributed solar incentive structure that may unintentionally slow market growth. It introduces first-come, first-served capacity blocks with 15-year fixed incentives but does not define the actual incentive values, reducing pricing transparency compared to the current system. By shortening SREC banking from five years to two years, the bill further limits flexibility and weakens project economics. A similarly structured ADI program in New Jersey saw declining solar deployment after launch, with build rates in 2023–2025 falling to less than half of their 2022 levels, raising concerns that Maryland could experience the same outcome.

500 Fifth Ave, 55th Floor, New York, NY 10110 | Toll Free: (877) 466-4606 | Direct: (415) 763-7732

Additionally, the bill would create a new escrow-based administrative system that adds cost and complexity. The PSC would face new responsibilities — including setting initial incentive values and capacity blocks. The bill also requires a jointly managed escrow account, annual recalculations of obligations and surcharges, and new tax-revenue redirections, along with expanded reporting requirements for large users. Collectively, these measures introduce more bureaucracy, administrative expense, and uncertainty into the program's long-term funding structure.

I respectfully ask you to consider the potential ratepayer impact and significant uncertainty of SB 341/HB 345. Expanding solar is an important goal that our company shares with the sponsor of the bill. However, SB 341/HB 345 risks slowing deployment when continued progress is critical. Maryland has been a leader in clean energy, but this bill risks moving us backward by creating a costly, complex, and ratepayer-funded procurement system that places nearly all financial risk on customers, adds new mandates, and expands bureaucracy. We should strengthen existing programs rather than replace them with an expansive, untested structure. For these reasons, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report on SB 341/HB 345. Thank you for your time and consideration.

SRECTrade is willing to provide additional information and resources if necessary.

Respectfully,

Caleb Einwechter
Manager, Renewables, SRECTrade

Xpansiv company, SRECTrade
SRECTrade is a management and transaction platform for Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) and clean transportation markets across North America, with more than a gigawatt of environmental assets under management. Since 2008, SRECTrade has been a domain expert in environmental-commodity markets, bringing a wealth of knowledge and transparency to the clean-energy industry. Our platform and presence in REC and LCFS (Low Carbon Fuel Standard) markets complements Xpansiv's rapidly expanding ESG infrastructure, which includes CBL, the largest spot exchange for carbon, RECs, and Digital Fuels; XSignals, which provides end-of-day and historical market data; EMA, the leading multi-registry portfolio management system for all environmental commodities; and APX, the leading provider of registry infrastructure for energy and environmental markets.

RECmint SB 341 written testimony Ian Ayers (202602

Uploaded by: Ian Ayers

Position: UNF

RECmint

Written Testimony of Ian Ayers, President, RECmint
In Opposition to SB 341
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 19, 2026

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 341, the "Affordable Solar Act."

My name is Ian Ayers, and I am the President of RECmint. We operate in multiple Renewable Portfolio Standard markets, including Maryland, and work directly with more than 1,500 Maryland households and small businesses that have invested their own capital in rooftop solar. We help them monetize their RECs and participate in Maryland's clean energy market.

We share the goal of accelerating solar deployment while preserving affordability. However, SB 341 replaces Maryland's market-based framework with a centralized, administratively determined incentive (ADI) model that has already produced serious structural problems in peer states that have enacted similar policies. For that reason, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report.

We know that Maryland's current RPS structure is not functioning perfectly. In 2024, electricity suppliers paid roughly $360 million in Alternative Compliance Payments. That signals the need for recalibration — including review of ACP levels, Tier I eligibility, and supply-demand alignment — not abandonment of market-based pricing. The Brighter Tomorrow legislative package from 2024 included REC multiplier and siting reforms that are early steps toward correction. Further targeted reform is warranted. A wholesale replacement is not.

SB 341 would replace competitive REC pricing with fixed, administratively determined incentive contracts lasting up to 15 years. Utilities are authorized to recover all program costs through a nonbypassable surcharge, including incentive payments and administrative costs. We recognize that clean energy incentives are commonly and appropriately funded through electric rates, and allocating a larger share of costs to high-load customers may address fairness concerns. But the central question is whether the long-term price contracts contemplated in the legislation will undermine the discipline that a competitive, open market brings.

Illinois provides a clear cautionary example. When Illinois shifted from an open market to an administratively determined Adjustable Block Program, the program was immediately oversubscribed and had to use lotteries to allocate capacity. The costs of administering the program alone now total approximately $17 million per delivery year. The Illinois Power Agency must update long-term procurement plans every two years through extensive regulatory proceedings. Most importantly, the program is structurally running out of money. The RPS budget — fixed as a percentage of historic sales — is projected to face a shortfall in the 2028–2029 program year. The Illinois Power Agency has formally warned that absent additional funding from ratepayers, it would be obligated to cease new renewable energy procurement events and program activities while continuing to pay the existing 15- to 20-year

contracts it has already obligated. In other words, long-term fixed contracts are consuming future program capacity. Either rates must increase, or the program stalls.

Similarly, New Jersey's transition to an ADI framework under the Successor Solar Incentive program faced administrative roadblocks. It required nearly three years of stakeholder proceedings before implementation. The shift did not substantially or immediately increase non-residential deployment. After the first year, incentives were cut for residential projects and reallocated to the non-residential segments after missing procurement targets. REC prices must be reviewed at least every three years, and if no action is taken they automatically decline by 10 percent — a blunt mechanism that does not reflect real-time market conditions.

In both states, administrative price setting did not eliminate volatility or complexity. It replaced market corrections with recurring regulatory proceedings. It created long-term fixed obligations that reduce flexibility. And it shifted risk directly to ratepayers who are now obligated to pay for these long-term fixed contract prices.

Under an open REC market, risk is shared. Developers must price projects against uncertain forward REC pricing curves. If supply increases, prices decline. If incentives are too high, market prices adjust downward. This structure requires precision and discipline to reduce cost overruns on projects. Under an ADI model, developers receive fixed 15-year pricing. If those prices prove too high relative to future market conditions, customers remain locked into those contracts. The risk does not disappear; it moves.

SB 341 also creates an escrow funding mechanism and mandates procurement of 4,000 MW of solar by 2036. Long-term contracts must be funded before new procurements can occur. As Illinois has demonstrated, once a large share of annual program revenue is committed to existing contracts, flexibility disappears. Policymakers are left with two options: increase rates or stop procuring.

Maryland's RPS is under strain, but it is not beyond repair. Adjusting ACP calibration, tightening geographic eligibility, aligning supply and demand, and continuing siting and interconnection reform are all tools available within a market-based structure. These approaches preserve price discovery and competitive discipline while allowing targeted corrections.

SB 341 fundamentally restructures Maryland's renewable energy market around administratively set, long-term pricing. The experiences of Illinois and New Jersey demonstrate that this model introduces administrative burden, long-term budget risk, and fixed pricing exposure without clear evidence of superior deployment outcomes.

For these reasons, RECmint respectfully urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 341.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Ayers
President, RECmint

CSG_Maryland SB 0341 Opposition Testimony_02.17.20
Uploaded by: Michael Daley
Position: UNF

carbon SOLUTIONS GROUP

February 17th, 2026

To Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to file written testimony in opposition to S.B. 0341.

My name is Michael Daley. I serve on behalf of Carbon Solutions Group ("CSG"). CSG develops technology, supports the deployment of distributed energy resources, and aggregates energy attribute certificates throughout the U.S. CSG has heavily invested in Maryland distributed solar. CSG is also investing heavily in Maryland's housing sector where we are decreasing consumer energy costs by developing new-build communities outfitted with geothermal heating and cooling systems.

Without Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), everyday citizens would be locked out of the energy economy and the grid would be less secure today.

But the energy economy remains forever in flux. Throughout the country, RPS Programs are now hitting an inflection point. As a market participant in PJM and MISO, CSG can attest to the fact that statehouses everywhere are reexamining past policy decisions and having tough conversations about how to structure tomorrow's markets in the face of an emergent technological revolution. For it is well agreed upon that commoditized artificial intelligence promises untold economic gains for certain corporations—but the question is at what cost? Unless new policies evolve new policy-based markets, working families will disproportionately bear the energy burden.

In this spirit, CSG appreciates the intent of S.B. 0341. The reality of this bill, however, is that—while it may be a temporary solution to a political problem—it is not a material solution to the underlying challenge facing energy markets. The challenge is, fundamentally, to develop a new price signal for renewable power. S.B. 0341 does the opposite. Rather than evolve Maryland's RPS price signal in response to a fast-moving affordability crisis, the bill would force Maryland to take several inadequate steps back with a cumbersome, bureaucratic model.

While there are particular design flaws in the bill, I think it is most important to zoom out on the broader picture. The systemic picture is the most critical element missing in S.B. 0341.

For one, it must be stated that Maryland does not necessarily need another 2 GW of utility-scale midday solar that is not coupled with energy storage and that is not embedded within a holistic market. An administratively set price signal for midday solar has limited value in a world in which mounting large load demand is 24/7 365. Continuing to subsidize daytime utility-scale renewable generation in this *ad hoc* manner will only become a greater political liability.

Any new procurement framework ought to establish a strong price signal for overnight power in order to meet new 24/7 demand. The price signal for overnight power begins with the nature of the compliance obligation itself. If the compliance obligation, like S.B. 0341's, is simply an aggregate MW value accounted for annually, no behavioral change will result in the marketplace. To tackle 24/7 demand, hourly energy accounting and hourly compliance must be codified within a single diversified renewable energy portfolio. Hourly energy accounting is already being embraced by major U.S. energy companies, technology/AI companies, and international standards bodies such as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

There is another conceptual error in S.B. 0341 that is worth highlighting. This is encapsulated in the provision: *"The Commission shall balance the need for continued market development for each market segment while limiting the net residential ratepayer cost* [...]*"*

While politically inconvenient, it must be acknowledged that what is needed for meaningful "continued market development" may never balance with a 5% limitation on the net residential ratepayer cost. This is, at its core, the policy deadlock that so many legislatures are facing.

There is no free lunch but the solution is clearer than may first appear. If the Assembly feels it is reaching the ceiling on what it can ask ratepayers to finance—it would be sensible to establish a new RPS Program in which large loads are the obligated party. An RPS for large load customers could effectively codify and build upon existing energy procurement behaviors of leading technology companies and ensure that this power is delivered where and when it is needed for Maryland. This approach results in specified procurement following the directive of the legislature. That directive must necessarily send hourly price signals for deliverable renewable power. To emphasize, this approach is already underway in other markets, led by the technology companies themselves.

This is, of course, just one potential avenue to pursue. The Committee will no doubt be presented with a variety of potential solutions to today's crisis. While action must be taken to address today's energy challenges, just any action is insufficient. I respectfully urge you to patiently and methodically work towards a solution that may materially transform Maryland for the better.

Respectfully,

Michael Daley
SVP, Policy & Regulatory Affairs
Carbon Solutions Group

EMA Testimony SB341.pdf
Uploaded by: Taylar Ramsey
Position: UNF

Maryland Senate Bill 341 – Affordable Solar Act

Position: Unfavorable

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 341, the *Affordable Solar Act*. Founded in 1997, the **Environmental Markets Association** is a pro-environment, pro-business, pro-competitive markets industry trade association with a mission to promote open, competitive and tradable market-based solutions to solve environmental challenges while simultaneously supporting sustainable economic development. EMA does this through education, advocacy, and networking opportunities for its members and the public. (www.enviromarkets.org)

While we share the sponsor's goal of expanding access to affordable solar energy, SB341 would fundamentally shift Maryland away from a competitive, tradeable SREC market to an administratively determined incentive (ADI) model. Based on both Maryland's recent experience and lessons learned from other states—particularly New Jersey—we believe this shift would undermine solar deployment, introduce unnecessary ratepayer risk, and impose a significant administrative burden on state agencies.

1. Maryland Needs a Long-Term Solar Strategy That Encourages Higher Build Rates

Maryland's clean energy goals require **sustained and increasing solar deployment**, not short-term structural changes that introduce uncertainty into the market. If Maryland is to meet its climate and affordability goals, policy should focus on **long-term solutions**, including thoughtful integration of **energy storage**, rather than dismantling a market framework that is currently delivering results.

New Jersey's experience is instructive. Under its legacy market-based SREC program, New Jersey saw strong and consistent solar development driven by tradeable SRECs whose prices reflected real supply and demand. Prior to the program's closure, SRECs frequently traded at

well over $200 per MWh, providing a strong economic signal that supported widespread deployment across project sizes.

When New Jersey transitioned away from that market-based system—first to transitional TRECs and ultimately to the **Successor Solar Incentive (SuSI) Program**, including an ADI structure—solar incentives became **fixed and administratively set**, with SREC-II values for many projects set at approximately **$85 per MWh for a fixed term**. While this approach increased predictability, it also **reduced the value signal that had previously driven robust development**, and overall build rates slowed relative to prior years.

Maryland cannot afford a similar outcome. In contrast to New Jersey's experience, Maryland's recent policy direction has shown positive momentum. The **Brighter Tomorrow Act** was a strong first step in modernizing the state's solar framework, and the **SREC multiplier is working as intended**. Build rates increased last year as developers responded to clearer, market-based price signals. SB341 would reverse that progress just as the market is beginning to respond.

Maryland should build on what is working—not replace it with an administratively complex model that has already shown limitations elsewhere.

2. SB341 Creates Unknown and Potentially Significant Ratepayer Impacts

In a year when **energy affordability is the top concern for Maryland households and businesses**, SB341 presents serious concerns due to its **unknown and potentially significant ratepayer impacts**.

An ADI model relies on regulators to set incentive levels in advance, rather than allowing prices to adjust dynamically through a competitive market. This creates a risk of **mispricing incentives**—either setting them too high, increasing ratepayer costs unnecessarily, or too low, suppressing development and undermining long-term affordability goals.

New Jersey's transition illustrates this risk. In moving from a market-based system to fixed incentive levels, the state necessarily shifted cost and performance risk from the market to regulators and ratepayers. Maryland should be cautious about adopting a similar structure without clear cost containment mechanisms and a demonstrated need for such a shift.

At a time when affordability is paramount, Maryland should not gamble on a program whose ultimate cost to ratepayers is uncertain.

3. The Administrative Burden of SB341 Is Significant and Premature

SB341 would also impose a **substantial administrative burden** on the Public Service Commission and related agencies.

Maryland has **only recently completed implementation of the Brighter Tomorrow Act**, a complex undertaking that required significant staff time, stakeholder engagement, and system updates. Requiring the PSC to design, implement, and administer an entirely new ADI framework so soon would place enormous strain on agency resources.

Experience from other states demonstrates that ADI programs require **ongoing administrative oversight**, frequent recalibration, and substantial staffing capacity. Implementing SB341 would almost certainly require **additional appropriations to hire new staff**, increasing costs for the state while diverting attention from effective administration of existing programs.

Before undertaking another major structural overhaul, Maryland should allow recent reforms to fully mature and be evaluated based on real-world performance.

Conclusion

Maryland has made meaningful progress toward a clean, affordable energy future. SB341 risks disrupting that progress by replacing a functioning, market-based system with an administratively determined model that has underperformed in other states, carries uncertain ratepayer impacts, and places significant new demands on state agencies.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to issue an **unfavorable report on SB341** and instead continue refining and strengthening the solar policies that are already delivering results for Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration.

FirstEnergy UNFAV EEE - SB341.pdf
Uploaded by: Timothy Troxell
Position: UNF

PotomacEdison
A FirstEnergy Company

Timothy R. Troxell, CEcD
Senior Advisor, Government Affairs
301-830-0121
ttroxell@firstenergycorp.com

10802 Bower Avenue
Williamsport, MD 21795

OPPOSE – Senate Bill 0341

SB0341 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Thursday, February 19, 2026

Potomac Edison, a subsidiary of FirstEnergy Corp., serves approximately 293,000 customers in all or parts of seven Maryland counties (Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington). FirstEnergy is dedicated to safety, reliability, and operational excellence. Its electric distribution companies form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving customers in Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia.

Unfavorable

Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy requests an Unfavorable report on SB-341 – *Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)*.

While we strongly support the state's clean-energy goals and continue to invest in the infrastructure needed to integrate renewable resources safely and reliably onto our system, SB-341 introduces a series of costly mandates, operational risks, and regulatory requirements that would ultimately harm customers and undermine the reliability and affordability of the electric grid.

Establishing aggressive new obligations requiring utilities to procure substantial quantities of Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs and SREC-IIs), with annual procurement levels set and continually adjusted by the Public Service Commission (PSC) is concerning. Utilities that fall short of these targets must make mandatory compliance payments, straining utility resources and further increasing the cost of electricity.

The bill also mandates that utilities recover SREC and SREC-II costs through a non-bypassable surcharge applied to every customer bill. This mechanism, combined with escalating compliance costs, will increase electricity rates statewide and place additional financial pressure on households, seniors, low-income customers, and Maryland's business community.

SB-341 also creates a host of new administrative and regulatory requirements for electric utilities, including establishment and management of state-mandated escrow accounts; expanded compliance tracking, verification, and reporting; negotiation of community benefit agreements; and ongoing program adjustments tied to PSC-driven reviews. These new obligations will require additional staffing, system changes, and continuous regulatory engagement – all of which will increase costs to customers at a time when affordability is a top concern. This will also increase compliance risk and make long-term grid planning more uncertain and costly.

4,000 Megawatts of in-state solar by 2035 - paired with new portable solar incentives, new credit classes, and recurring PSC program resets - risks destabilizing Maryland's energy market. Utilities are likely to face cash-flow strain from purchasing credits in volatile markets; competitive displacement by subsidized distributed solar providers; difficulty forecasting system needs due to shifting statutory requirements; and higher long-term

costs that will pass through to ratepayers. All these conditions introduce uncertainty at a time when electric utilities must already navigate increasing electrification demands, grid modernization needs, and extreme-weather resilience challenges.

One of our greatest concerns with SB-341 is the operational and safety risks associated with the portable solar provisions. The bill requires utilities to accept growing quantities of ad hoc, customer-owned generation, without proper controls and standards. These systems could introduce serious risks, such as unintended back-feeding during outages, placing line workers and public safety in jeopardy. Frequency synchronization challenges on distribution equipment not designed for irregular intermittent generation could also threaten system stability. While indemnification language could address legal liability, it would not resolve the operational hazards or the infrastructure upgrades needed to accommodate widespread adoption of portable solar systems.

Although framed as an affordability measure, SB-341 includes provisions that effectively constrain large energy users from expanding in Maryland. Limiting procurement flexibility is likely to increase costs, which could lead these capital-intensive industries to invest elsewhere. Predictable, scalable, and affordable energy solutions make the state more competitive and more attractive for these job producing entities.

For these reasons, Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy respectfully requests an <u>Unfavorable</u> report on SB-341. This bill imposes costly mandates, expands regulatory burdens, introduces operational risks, and creates the possibility of market disruption that will ultimately be borne by Maryland's ratepayers. We remain committed to collaborating with the General Assembly, the PSC, and all stakeholders to advance renewable energy in a manner that protects customers, maintains grid safety, and supports a balanced and sustainable energy transition.

SB0341 & HB0345 - OPC Testimony in Senate.pdf
Uploaded by: David Lapp
Position: INFO

DAVID S. LAPP
PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

WILLIAM F. FIELDS
DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

JULIANA BELL
DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COUNSEL

OPC
OFFICE OF PEOPLE'S COUNSEL
State of Maryland

6 ST. PAUL STREET, SUITE 2102
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202
WWW.OPC.MARYLAND.GOV

BRANDI NIELAND
DIRECTOR, CONSUMER
ASSISTANCE UNIT

CARISSA RALBOVSKY
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

BILL NO.:	Senate Bill 0341/House Bill 0345 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
COMMITTEE:	Education, Energy, and the Environment Environment and Transportation
HEARING DATE:	February 19, 2026 (EEE) February 10, 2026 (ENT)
SPONSOR:	Senators Brooks, Kramer, and Lam Delegates Charkoudian et al.
POSITION:	Informational

****

The Office of People's Counsel (OPC) respectfully offers the following informational comments on Senate Bill 0341/House Bill 0345, the Affordable Solar Act, which seeks to support the State's electric system and advance its clean energy goals by (1) encouraging adoption of portable solar technology; and (2) directing the Public Service Commission to issue regular solicitations for the development of new solar facilities that, in total, will increase solar generating capacity in the State by 4,000 megawatts (MW) by January 1, 2035.

More specifically, the Affordable Solar Act proposes to make the implementation of small, plug-in solar energy generating systems easier and more affordable by removing existing regulatory hurdles—for example, by eliminating the requirement to enter into an interconnection agreement with the local utility and authorizing self-installation. Because portable solar systems can be located in smaller spaces, like balconies, they can be easily moved. They are also generally far less expensive than rooftop arrays and have the potential to expand the benefits of solar to a broader group of customers—including

renters and low- and moderate-income customers—at little to no cost to non-participating customers.

Separately, the Affordable Solar Act seeks to incentivize the development of 4,000 MW of new solar generating capacity in the State by establishing two programs through which the PSC would create a new class of solar renewable energy certificates (SRECs), referred to as SREC-IIs: (1) a utility-scale solar facilities incentive program, through which new solar facilities with a generating capacity greater than 5 MW would be eligible to compete in regular procurements run by the PSC; and (2) a distributed solar facilities incentive program, through which facilities with a generating capacity less than or equal to 5 MW would be eligible to apply for SREC-IIs allotted to particular market segments and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

The monetary value of SREC-IIs will be determined by the PSC—through the competitive solicitation process for utility-scale facilities and through an administratively determined process for distributed solar facilities. The legislation would require each electric company to purchase a portion of the available SREC-IIs—as well as a portion of the SRECs available from projects grandfathered into the existing SREC market—based on each company's portion of retail sales. Electric companies would then pass those costs on to their customers through a non-bypassable surcharge on customer bills.

The Affordable Solar Act also proposes a number of mechanisms designed to limit or offset potential costs to ratepayers, including:

- limiting the net residential ratepayer cost of the distributed solar program to not more than five percent of the average annual electric bill over the duration of the program;
- authorizing the PSC to set confidential high- and low-application thresholds and authorizing the PSC to set a cap on the incentive awarded under the utility scale solar program;
- requiring that alternative compliance payments (ACPs) made after October 1, 2026, be used to fund future procurements of SRECs and SREC-IIs; and
- requiring that 75 percent of utility franchise tax revenues attributed to large load customers be used to fund future procurements of SRECs and SREC-IIs.

OPC appreciates these efforts to minimize the potential impact on residential customer bills, and with them, the Affordable Solar Act has potential to decrease costs for Maryland ratepayers, in part, by supporting generation that is not dependent on volatile fuel costs. Ultimately, however, whether the new requirements increase or decrease costs for customers depends on a multitude of factors that we have been unable to analyze, including the pricing of SREC-IIs under each of the programs, whether and how forecasted load materializes, and whether sufficient ACP revenue is available to offset

these costs. To the extent that the Affordable Solar Act would protect ACP revenue—which comes from utility customers and is paid into the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) to be used to decrease energy demand, provide energy-related benefits to low-income residential electric customers, and promote clean energy[1]—from being used for unrelated purposes, OPC supports redirecting and restricting use of those funds. However, we have not been able to assess how directing alternative compliance payments to ratepayers would impact other programs that help Maryland ratepayers, such as programs for low- and moderate-income households run by the Maryland Energy Administration.

OPC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on SB 0341/HB 0345.

[1] Md. Code Ann., St. Gov't Art. § 9-20B-05.

SB 341_MDCC_Affordable Solar Act_INFO.pdf
Uploaded by: Hannah Allen
Position: INFO

MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

Senate Bill 341

Date: February 19, 2026
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Position: Information

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

The Chamber supports efforts to expand access to clean and renewable energy, including policies that encourage responsible growth of solar generation and broaden participation for Maryland residents and businesses. While Senate Bill 341 (SB 341) includes provisions addressing small-scale, plug-in solar systems, those provisions represent only a portion of the legislation. As drafted, SB 341 significantly restructures the Renewable Portfolio Standard and the Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) program, expands compliance and payment obligations beyond electric suppliers to include all electric companies, and introduces new procurement and compliance requirements that would apply to municipal utilities and electric cooperatives. These changes are substantial and highly technical, and the bill leaves important questions regarding its practical implications.

SB 341 replaces market-based price signals with an administratively defined incentive structure that would allow the Public Service Commission to effectively set SREC prices. This represents a significant departure from the existing market-driven framework and removes competitive forces that traditionally help manage costs. In addition, the bill lifts existing Alternative Compliance Payments without clearly demonstrating how the replacement mechanisms would protect ratepayers. As drafted, it is not clear how these changes would translate into lower electricity costs or improved affordability for Maryland households and businesses, and there is uncertainty regarding how compliance costs would ultimately be reflected in customer bills.

We understand that New Jersey adopted similar policies. However, available data suggests that it did not accelerate solar deployment and, in some cases, coincided with reduced build rates. With respect to the plug-in solar provisions, SB 341 raises technical and safety questions related to building readiness and electrical standards, including how two-way power flow would be addressed in buildings that were not designed for it.

The Chamber believes further clarity regarding cost impacts, implementation, and technical standards would be beneficial to fully assess its potential effects on ratepayers and the business community.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments on **SB 341**.

Maryland Energy Adm
Uploaded by: Megan Outten
Position: INFO

Maryland Energy Administration

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: SB 341 - Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
DATE: February 19, 2026

MEA Position: LETTER OF INFORMATION

The Maryland Energy Administration would like to acknowledge the long-standing leadership and sustained commitment of the bill sponsor to advancing forward-looking energy policy in Maryland. Over multiple sessions, the sponsor has consistently engaged on the complex issues of market design, affordability, and consumer protection that are necessary to ensure Maryland's clean energy transition is both durable and equitable.

The Affordable Solar Act (SB 341) aims to advance Maryland's clean energy and affordability goals by strengthening the State's solar policies in a way that supports advanced development, even in the face of federal uncertainty and the loss of federal tax incentives that were intended to help spur development. This bill incentivises additional solar generation by directing the Public Service Commission to implement structured, recurring procurements for solar. SB 341's procurement and program design ensures consistent mechanisms for SREC and SREC-II procurement, setting clear parameters for solicitations, contract terms, and performance requirements. Importantly, SB 341 includes provisions directing the Commission to balance market development with consumer impacts, including consideration of system benefits such as avoided capacity and transmission and distribution costs.

However, it is likely that the bill will result in increased costs to ratepayers, though MEA is unable to estimate the magnitude of those impacts at this time due to the sheer number of variables. The bill does mitigate those increased costs by redirecting the revenue supplied by Alternative Compliance Payments to an escrow account managed by the Public Service Commission. The bill further limits ratepayer impacts of the Administratively Determined Incentive created by the legislation to 5%. The likelihood that these measures would fully mitigate those costs remains in question. MEA believes the committee should consider these impacts before rendering its report.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Megan Outten, Policy manager, at megan.outten@maryland.gov or 443.842.1780.

1800 Washington Blvd., Suite 755, Baltimore, MD 21230
(410) 537-4000 | 1-800-72-ENERGY