
ROBERT G. CASSILLY
Harford County Executive



ROBERT S. McCORD
Director of Administration

February 27, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Opposition to House Bill 1104 – Residential Solar Energy Systems – Local Inspections and Permitting

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members,

On behalf of the citizens of Harford County, I respectfully submit this letter in opposition to House Bill 1104.

There are a number of concerns that this proposed legislation raises.

The main concern is safety. We continue to experience over 25% of permit application submissions that fail to comply with the roof solar access provisions of the 2021 International Residential Code (IRC). These accessways provide critical access to fire service personnel in conducting fire operations as well as ensuring a clear path from mandated emergency escape and rescue openings (EERO). This legislation could adversely compromise occupant and first responder safety.

Under the current manual review process, this is an issue that can be identified and addressed. There is no known automated software that we are aware of that can achieve the same results by evaluating the code requirements that the home was built to and attempting to determine when a window was designated as an EERO.

Similar deficits would exist in building permits and electrical inspections. Remote inspections cannot fully reflect on-site conditions required for compliance with the IRC. For instance, verifying torque requirements for safe conductor connections is not possible through virtual inspections. Title 6 of the Business Occupations and Professions Article requires that anyone performing electrical services be licensed by the State of Maryland and potentially local jurisdiction. This requirement ensures that qualified individuals are performing the electrical installations.

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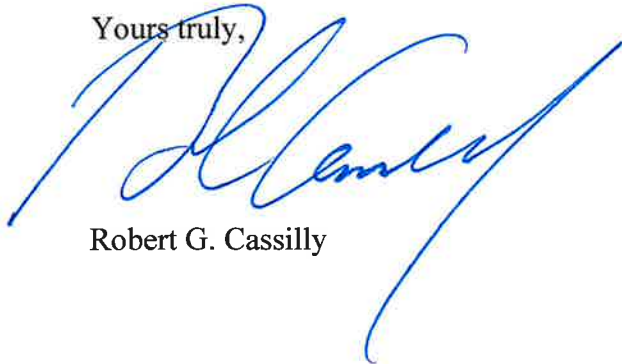
Onsite inspection allows for the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to perform periodic credential checks of installers to ensure that licensed and qualified individuals are performing the work. The prohibition of onsite initial inspections will undoubtedly promote the ability to bypass this requirement and again endanger occupant safety.

Jurisdictions will also be made more vulnerable to embedded IT security threats with the submittal of electronic videos and files for inspections. This will undoubtedly require enhanced security protocol to be implemented, another additional cost.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge an unfavorable report on House Bill 1104.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Cassilly", with a long, sweeping flourish extending downwards and to the right.

Robert G. Cassilly