



HB0345 - SUPPORT
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HB0345 – Affordable Solar Act

Meeting of the Environment and Transportation Committee

February 10, 2026

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a **favorable** report on HB034, 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.

HB0345 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 Utah¹.

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 HB0345. 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/>.