



3 March 2026

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Environment & Transportation Committee
Room 251, Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Written Testimony

HB1104: Residential Solar Energy Systems – Local Inspections and Permitting

Position: Favorable

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment & Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify favorably on HB 723, the SAVINGS 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 HB1104, Residential Solar Energy Systems – Local Inspections and Permitting. This bill builds on legislation, the Brighter Tomorrow Act, which was passed in 2024. That legislation established the mandate on local jurisdictions to administer automated permitting processes for residential solar, as part of the overall goal to lower solar costs and lower barriers for homeowners looking to keep energy costs down.

In the aftermath of the repeal of the federal Solar Investment Tax Credit, the residential solar industry is the first to fully feel its effects. Homeowners looking to adopt and own their own solar system no longer have access to the tax credit. That expired at the end of 2025. Without that incentive, residential solar costs are going up.




Cost reduction has already been a priority for our industry for years. However, today, it is indirect costs (or “soft costs”) that make up the majority of potential to reduce the cost to install residential solar. Those costs come in the form of overhead to understand and comply with different jurisdictions permitting standards, practices, and document requirements. Permitting takes staff time from solar companies to sometimes meet in person, and a permitting process that can take weeks discourages homeowners from following through on their home solar dream. The frustration can build once the system has been installed, when the solar company and the homeowner wait for the inspection process.



The automated permitting mandate did not lead to mass improvement of the residential solar permitting process because most Maryland permitting jurisdictions have not yet followed through on the mandate. That means that the potential savings for residential solar – as much as \$4500 lower cost per system – has not yet been unlocked for most Marylanders, especially if remote inspections can also be made available.

Residential Solar Unlocks Ratepayer Savings

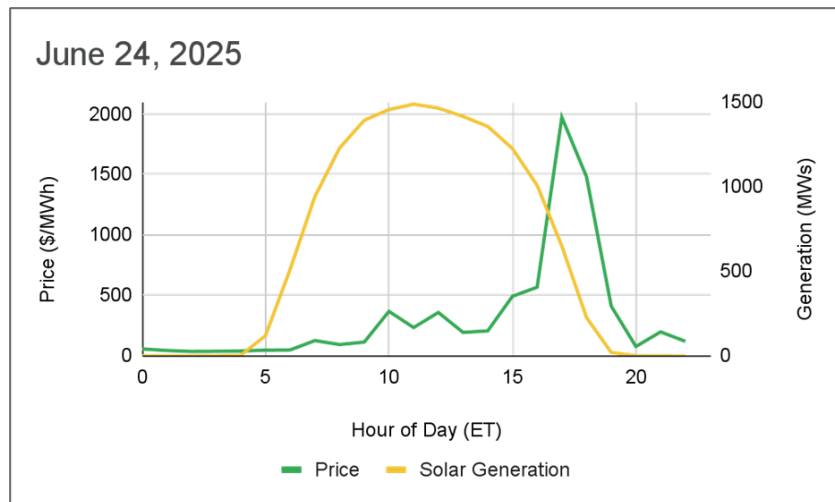
The data shows that distributed solar and storage strategies are scalable and help the electric grid. According to a study from the independent consulting firm The Brattle Group, distributed resources, which include a range of advanced energy technologies (such as local solar, storage, smart appliances, 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.

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

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.

Residential solar can unlock savings not only for their adopters but for the neighbors and communities where residential solar is generating. Especially in this time of energy affordability burdens, Marylanders must have access to all the tools to lower their energy bills, especially through residential solar.

CHESSA urges a favorable report on HB1104. 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