



CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

House Bill 345 – Public Utilities - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)
House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 10, 2026

SUPPORT

The City of Takoma Park urges a favorable vote on the Affordable Solar Act (HB 345), 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.

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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.

HB 345 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 HB 345, and encourages a favorable vote.

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