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Committee: Environment and Transportation Committee

Testimony on: HB0460 “Solar Energy – Construction of Generating Stations in Priority Preservation Areas and Study “

Position: Favorable with amendments

Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Valleys Planning Council, a non-profit that conserves land and resources, preserves historic character and maintains the rural feel and land uses in northwestern Baltimore County, urges HB0460 be amended to reflect that the area covered by solar energy generating facilities in a priority preservation area (PPA) should be 0 acres.

In the short time since legislation was enacted to eliminated the ability of Maryland counties to site solar in a way that addresses their unique needs and landscapes, Baltimore County has faced an onslaught of proposed solar installations, with no choice but to wave them on through. The amount of money being offered by solar developers far exceeds anything the cash-starved land preservation community can offer. Maryland spent more than 40 years and hundreds of millions of dollars preserving land. Maryland’s land preservation programs have been cut off at the knees by budget cuts. Allowing solar by right on ag land means that if and when the land preservation programs are able to return to full strength, they will find much land that should have been preserved is instead covered n solar panels.

Valleys Planning Council urges a favorable with amendments report on HB0460.

Renée Hamidi
Executive Director
Valleys Planning Council

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