



HB1104 - SUPPORT
Frances Stewart, MD
Elders Climate Action Maryland
frances.stewart6@gmail.com
301-718-0446

HB1104- Residential Solar Energy Systems – Local Inspections and Permitting

Meeting of the Environment and Transportation Committee

March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on HB1104.

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.

Electricity demand is rising in Maryland and across the country. Solar energy is the cheapest and cleanest new energy source and can be built quickly. We need more solar generation at every scale – large solar farms, community solar, rooftop, and residential solar. But solar energy is lagging behind in Maryland. One of the key reasons is the “soft costs,” hassles, and delays related to permitting and inspections.

In a 2019 study by the Solar Energy Industries Association found that current permitting and inspection issues can add as much as \$7,000 to the cost of a residential system. This makes systems less affordable for consumers and often delays the installation by months.

HB1104 dramatically reduces the cost and complexity of home solar and battery installations in Maryland. That will result in more in-state generation, better grid resiliency, and significant savings for Maryland families. The bill was carefully crafted with input from a broad range of stakeholders.

HB1104 does this by streamlining and simplifying the permitting and inspection process for solar energy and battery storage systems in Maryland. It requires counties to institute instant permitting, cutting the time and expense of this often lengthy process. It simplifies the inspection process by allowing remote inspections with video or photo confirmation. It allows certified installers to “pull the meter” to make grid connections more quickly. It caps the cost of permits to actual expenditures, prohibiting jurisdictions from charging unreasonable fees and disincentivizing solar and battery installations. Finally, HB1104 implements a uniform building code, which will standardize installations and reduce costs for consumers.

HB1104 will reduce these costs and delays, saving money Maryland homeowners, money, increasing in-state electricity generation, reducing peak demand in the state, and helping us reach our climate goals under the Climate Solutions Now Act.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable report on HB1104.
Thank you.