

Testimony on: HB990 - Public Utilities - Small Solar Energy Generating System Incentive Program - Eligibility and Generating Capacity

Committee: Environment & Transportation

Submitting: Deborah A. Cohn

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Hearing Date: March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Committee Members:

I am requesting this Committee to support the main parts of HB990 to extend and strengthen the Small Solar Energy Generating System Incentive Program, with amendments.

Marylanders have faced skyrocketing electricity costs this winter as the impacts of extraordinarily high capacity auctions and the costs of grid upgrades are more fully showing up in utility bills. Meanwhile, interconnecting the lowest cost and fastest to develop electricity generating sources, solar and wind, are frustratingly slow, and federal support is virtually absent.

HB990 addresses these problems. The bill makes it easier and more cost-effective for residents and small businesses to utilize solar energy and incentivizes new commercial and industrial generation that will increase reliability, lower the wholesale cost of electricity, and delay the need for new transmission lines. It achieves this by extending the small solar energy generating system incentive program from 2028 to 2031, and doubling the cap for larger systems to 540MW.

I strongly support HB345/SB341, "the Affordable Solar Act", as the most comprehensive approach for increasing all sizes of new solar energy generation in the state. Prudently, that bill leverages the strong power of market based solutions (even in the administratively determined approaches for smaller projects) over regulatory solutions. Since often only one or two vehicles addressing a problem are enacted each Session, I urge this Committee to amend HB990 so that it conforms to and is incorporated into HB345.

Thank you.

Deborah A. Cohn (D16)