

HB0345 - SUPPORT

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HB0345 - Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Skye Richmond representing Bright Saver, a non-profit dedicated to building a plug-in solar movement in the US, making solar ownership affordable and accessible to everyone. I am testifying to encourage the Committee to support HB0345 to allow the people of Maryland to have greater access to the benefits of solar PV systems and to save money by reducing their electricity bills.

Maryland is ready to lead on clean energy, and Marylanders are ready for change. We believe that Maryland families deserve real solutions that give us control over our energy future, not just more expensive bills. Plug-in solar provides meaningful access for renters and apartment residents. According to 2020 Census data, approximately 32% of housing units in Maryland are occupied by renters. We believe energy independence should be available to all Marylanders, not just those who own homes, and this bill breaks down such barriers that have kept solar access out of reach.

Plug-in solar reduces electricity bills and improves energy resilience. By directly supplying power to household appliances, these systems reduce the amount of electricity households must purchase from utilities. A typical plug in solar system can reduce apartment electricity bills by 10-30%².

We support HB0345 as written because it ensures that plug-in solar systems are safe for consumers and for the grid. Systems installed according to safety standards cited in the bill will not:

- Shock users
- Overload circuits or create fire hazards
- Backfeed during a power outage, which protects line workers and anyone working on a multi-unit building

Proven policy models show that exempting small plug-in solar systems from one-size-fits-all interconnection requirements—while maintaining clear safety standards—can significantly reduce costs and accelerate clean energy adoption without shifting costs to utilities or other

ratepayers. For instance, in Utah HB 340 passed unanimously last year and this year, more than 25 states are moving plug-in solar legislation across the political spectrum.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB0345 and support legislation that expands access to affordable, scalable clean energy solutions.

Thank you for your consideration.

¹ Maryland Matters, "Energy bills likely to tick up again in 2026 after electricity auction clears at maximum price," (July 2025)

<https://marylandmatters.org/2025/07/23/energy-bills-likely-to-tick-up-again-in-2026-after-electricity-auction-clears-at-maximum-price/>

² Solar Tech Online, "Solar Panels For Apartment Balconies: Complete 2025 Installation Guide," (August 2025)

<https://solartechonline.com/blog/solar-panels-apartment-balcony-guide/>