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BILL NO.: SB 592

TITLE: State-Funded Construction and Major Renovation Projects - Solar Panels - Requirement

SPONSOR: Senator West

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

DATE: February 19, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** Senate Bill 592 – State-Funded Construction and Major Renovation Projects - Solar Panels - Requirement. This bill would require the State to design, engineer, and execute certain construction projects in a manner that allows the roof to withstand the weight of solar panels.

Baltimore County has experienced rapid population growth in recent years resulting in an increase in new development projects and energy consumption. The only way to effectively meet these demands while furthering our environmental goals is to prioritize renewable energy sources. The roofs of our older buildings, however, have not been constructed with the weight of solar panels in mind, and would collapse without significant renovations. The costs associated with retroactively constructing a building to be “solar ready” are immense, and could be mitigated in the future if we begin to plan accordingly now. This legislation would further Baltimore County’s progress towards its long-term goals of establishing widespread renewable resources use by ensuring new State-funded public construction projects are built to be solar ready.

The County feels, however, that this bill could be strengthened if it were amended to include other recipients of State funds such as non-profits, businesses and other institutions. This would establish a more consistent position from the State on the solar readiness of new construction projects across the board and ensure that all new construction projects will be able to accommodate a form of energy production that protects the long-term health of our environment.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 592. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, at 443-900-6582.