



**HB469 – State-Funded Construction and Major Renovation Projects –
Solar Panels – Requirement
Testimony before House Health and Government Operations Committee
Hearing Feb. 17, 2021
Position: Favorable**

Madame Chair, Madame Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Elizabeth Fixsen, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB469**, requiring new construction of state buildings to contemplate solar panel installation. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members).

Over the past few decades, the cost of solar panels has plummeted, making solar energy a cost-effective energy-saving option for both residences and commercial buildings. The cost of a solar panel system is usually measured in dollars per watt. On EnergySage, a commercial installer, states that the average commercial system was priced at \$2.87/Watt before any rebates or incentives, with most quotes ranging from \$2.50/Watt to \$3.22/Watt. According to Consumer Affairs.com, electricity from fossil fuels costs between 5 cents and 17 cents per kilowatt-hour. Solar energy costs average between 3 cents and 6 cents per kilowatt-hour and are trending down, according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. With abundant third-party financing options, the capital costs of solar can be borne by others, while the state can reap the benefits of this low-cost power.

As our planet is facing catastrophic effects from climate change, it is imperative that state and local governments, as well as individuals, take every possible measure to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, which means reducing use of fossil fuels. Maryland is leading the way with many state and local government initiatives to promote renewable energy, and **HB469** is an important tool to do just that.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Elizabeth Fixsen
Savage, MD

Sources Cited:

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<https://www.solarponics.com/renewable-energy-news/commercial-solar-cost-per-watt/>
Solar Energy Costs vs. Fossil Fuels. (31 March 2020). Consumer Affairs.
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