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April 24, 2025

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor of Maryland
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore,

We write to you today to urgently request you protect rural Maryland and veto HB 1036/SB 931 – Renewable Energy Certainty Act.

As our members fervently argued on the House Floor during the debate on these measures, this legislation could irrevocably change the landscape of Maryland's rural communities and severely damage Maryland's largest commercial industry – agriculture.

Rural Maryland will soon be home to the largest solar farms in the state. The Cherrywood Solar I project currently under construction will encompass 1,059 acres in Caroline County. Just last week, the Public Service Commission held a hearing on the Jade Meadow III Solar Project which will cover 1,852 acres in Garrett and Allegany counties. With the elimination of local control in solar siting that this legislation provides, one can only imagine the size and scope of the solar projects that will come once this bill goes into effect.

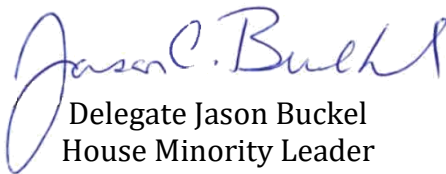
This legislation opens the floodgates for unlimited solar farm development and ties the hands of local governments to restrict them. The legislation also gifts solar developers with a new fast-tracked approval process for solar projects as well as the ability to build these sprawling projects on protected agricultural land.

Our members have grave concerns that the attraction of inexpensive farmland in rural parts of the state would lead to a significant loss in active farmland – something that could decimate Maryland's interdependent agricultural industries.


Every acre of agricultural land that is taken out of production has a seven-fold impact on the local economy. Currently, the life span of a solar farm is approximately 30 years. After decommissioning, it takes at least another decade to return the soil to agricultural use. Once these agricultural acres are lost, they are gone for at least a generation, if they *ever* return.

Clean energy is a laudable goal, but it is not one that should be pursued at *any* price. It is our duty as elected leaders to find solutions that balance everyone's needs. The Renewable Energy Certainty Act tips the scales too much in favor of solar companies and against the interests of rural agricultural communities and local government control. For all of these reasons, we respectfully urge your veto of HB1036/SB 931.

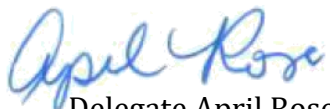
Sincerely yours,



Delegate Jason Buckel
House Minority Leader




Delegate Jesse Pippy
House Minority Whip



Delegate April Rose
Assistant Minority Leader



Delegate Wayne Hartman
Chief Deputy Minority Whip



Delegate Jeff Ghrist
District 36 – Cecil, Kent,
Queen Anne's & Caroline Counties