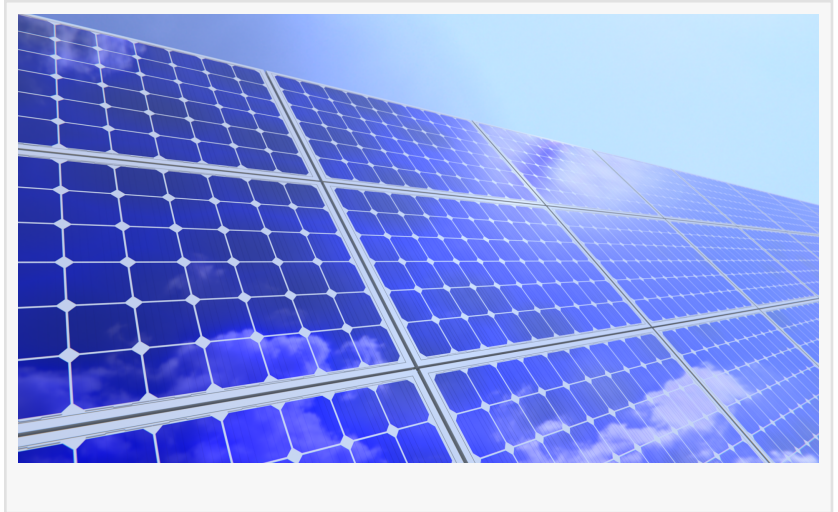


Brighter Tomorrow Act Heads to Governor's Desk for Signature

Most consequential solar legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly during the Moore Administration

ANNAPOLIS, MD, USA, April 10, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On April 8, 2024, the Maryland General Assembly passed [Senate Bill 783, the Brighter Tomorrow Act](#), legislation that would lower the cost of developing Maryland solar projects and increase the value of solar for energy consumers across the state.



The Brighter Tomorrow Act is necessary to spur additional solar development in Maryland, as part of its transition to a clean economy and to strengthen the electric grid for all communities. The state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) had already established a nation-leading mandate to deploy solar that equals 14.5% of Maryland's electric demand by 2030. Maryland has fallen behind the pace to meet that goal, only meeting 55% of the policy's intermediate 2022 target.

As passed by the General Assembly, the major provisions of the Brighter Tomorrow Act would:

- Make it easier for electric suppliers to meet their solar targets by increasing the compliance value for energy generated from certain types of new solar projects, including residential and commercial-scale projects, in the state's RPS while also spurring the increased development of various types of local solar;
- Increase energy equity in Maryland by creating a residential solar grant program, administered by the Maryland Energy Administration, where low-and-moderate income households, could receive as much as \$7500 for adopting solar; and
- Facilitating the adoption of automated, digital solar permitting software for Maryland local governments, which will improve local government efficiency, lower solar installation costs, and set up Maryland communities to help more and more families adopt solar for themselves.

"The Moore Administration's commitment to achieving 100% clean energy by 2035 is more attainable with the Brighter Tomorrow Act. A thriving solar industry is a significant component to creating a clean energy economy for everyone. Mainstream adoption of local solar and battery storage unlocks the lowest cost path to a clean energy future. This is one of the most consequential solar bills to pass in years, and will fuel an expansion of Maryland's solar workforce." said Robin Dutta, Executive Director of the Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association (CHESSA).

"The Brighter Tomorrow Act demonstrates Maryland's commitment to clean energy by establishing innovative new pathways for solar development on priority sites. It is the result of tireless work of the Solar Task Force, and I am proud of this deeply collaborative effort." said District 30 Senator Sarah Elfreth, the primary sponsor of SB783, the Brighter Tomorrow Act.

District 15 Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo, who sponsored the House cross-file of the Brighter Tomorrow Act and also served on the 2023 Solar Task Force, said, "The Brighter Tomorrow Act was a direct result of the Solar Task Force, and over the course of the legislative process it grew to contain four separate bills to encourage solar development in Maryland. One of my other bills, promoting the SolarAPP+ tool, was added to the bill and will help to streamline the permitting process for residential solar. I was incredibly excited to work on this project and am even more proud to see it pass."

Said District 15 Delegate Lily Qi: "I am thrilled that my bill to expand rooftop solar in low-income and underserved communities has become part of this important piece of legislation. As we rely increasingly on an electricity-powered economy and lifestyle, such decentralized small-scale power generation systems will play an oversized role in our clean energy future."

"Getting the Brighter Tomorrow Act across the finish line just as the legislative session was ending shows what we can accomplish when a broad range of stakeholders work together towards a common goal," said Kristen Harbeson, Political Director of Maryland League of Conservation Voters (LCV). "Even with the obstacles we faced this session, this legislation puts Maryland on track for a cleaner, fairer energy future by speeding up the growth of solar energy and making sure its benefits reach every corner of our state. We're excited to partner with our allies to keep this momentum going and build a Maryland that works for all of us."

"The Brighter Tomorrow Act (BTA) will increase clean energy adoption in Maryland while making rooftop solar adoption more affordable for low-and moderate-income Marylanders," Ed Merrick, President of the Maryland Rooftop Solar Coalition (MRSC). "Rooftop solar is an economic, public health, and clean energy driver in the state, and BTA will ensure that more of it is installed in Maryland. The BTA is a step in the right direction to help Maryland reach its ambitious climate goals. In addition to Sen. Elfreth, Del. Fraiser-Hildago, and Del. Qi mentioned in this release, we'd also like to thank Senator Karen Lewis Young, the Senate sponsor of the residential grant program, and Senator Feldman, a continued champion of renewable energy, for their tireless efforts to make BTA a reality."

About the organization: CHESSA represents over 100 member companies in all market segments across the solar and energy storage industries, primarily across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Our purpose is to promote the mainstream adoption of local solar, large-scale solar, and battery storage throughout the electric grid in order to realize a stable and affordable grid for all consumers.

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