

SUPPORT SB 234/HB 367

Topic: Parking Lot Solar Development Pilot Program and Fund

Bill Patrons: Senator Ghazala Hashmi & Delegate David Reid

OVERVIEW:

Parking lot solar, a non-centralized, more distributed energy system, typically costs 50-100% more to implement than utility scale solar because of the additional cost of labor and materials to construct the canopies. This pilot program, funded through a levelized Solar Renewable Energy Certificate (SREC) incentive value determined by a stakeholder group, would close the cost gap to encourage more such projects in the Commonwealth.

Reasons to support:

The Problem

- Heavily increasing electric demand adds numerous challenges to achieving Virginia's mandated clean energy goals.
- Solar's impacts on land, particularly Virginia's prime agricultural land and forests, to meet this demand will be in the hundreds of thousands of acres.
- Increased transmission lines are needed to both connect larger scale systems and bring in power from out of state to mitigate the increasing gap between demand and supply.
- Current wait time to interconnect renewable energy to the PJM grid averages 5-7 years. Over 40 GWs of utility-scale solar is currently in queue in the Commonwealth, with carbon-emitting sources that create deleterious health impacts likely to fill the demand gap.

Parking Lot Solar's Role in the Solution

- More parking lot solar = less removal of prime agricultural soils and forests.
- Less transmission impacts. Excess energy goes directly onto the distribution grid.
- Cleaner air and less health impacts on Virginians.
- Avoids the long PJM interconnection queue, meaning clean energy gets on the grid and replaces carbon-emitting sources faster.
- Building solar on parking lots uses land that has already been impacted and is already accounted for under existing stormwater management plans, meaning additional mitigation (e.g. buffers) is not required.
- Virginia could generate around 64 Terawatts Hours of energy from parking lot solar on an annual basis. That would be approximately half of Virginia's energy usage.



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