

# SUPPORT HB 590 / SB 382

**Topic:** Clean Energy

**Bill Patron:** Delegate Hernandez, Senator Surovell

## OVERVIEW:

HB590 makes getting a permit for a home to install solar panels faster and easier. The Commonwealth will make a Smart Solar Permitting software platform available for approving residential solar and battery permits. The Department of Energy will set up the platform by July 1, 2027. Localities (if they opt to use their own platform instead of the Department's) will adopt a Smart Permitting option as a tool by January 1, 2028, with the opportunity for a six month extension.

## REASONS TO SUPPORT:

- We need to modernize residential solar permitting in Virginia. With smart solar permitting, we can fix our current permitting system: shortening wait times, improving efficiency, and lowering costs for families across the state.
- Smart permitting cuts red tape blocking homeowners from switching to clean energy.
  - Red tape at permitting offices adds approximately \$3,800 to the installation cost of a typical rooftop solar system in Virginia.
  - Speeds up the solar permitting process, reducing delays and cancellations.
- Virginia has some of the slowest solar permitting timelines in the South.
  - Approximately one-in-eight of all residential solar projects that begin the permitting process are cancelled in Virginia, and contractors cite permitting delays as the biggest reason for the cancellations.
- Creates energy affordability by lowering project costs and saves resources at permitting offices, allowing them to give attention to approving other permits, such as new housing construction.
- Supports Virginia's goal of 100% clean energy by 2050 by supporting small scale solar projects.
- The Smart Solar Permitting online platform would be an option for installers. The bill does not preclude an installer from using the traditional permitting process.
- The platform should be able to process at least 75 percent of residential solar projects installed in the Commonwealth.



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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit [www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker](http://www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker). VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.