

# PARTNERS *for* OPEN SPACE

## Testimony on SB 685 – Program Open Space – Use of Property Renewable Energy and Storage

**Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

**February 27, 2024**

**Position: Unfavorable**

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

Partners for Open Space is the statewide group that advocates for the preservation of Maryland land, our farms, forests, parks and playgrounds. Since 1969 Maryland has been a national leader in land preservation because the legislature at that time had the foresight to establish a dedicated revenue source.

We appreciate and support Senator Augustine’s efforts to facilitate the necessary transformation to clean energy and look forward to future opportunities to identify appropriate locations. We cannot support any efforts to place commercial solar facilities on properties or easements purchased with transfer tax revenues. These properties represent:

- The best and most productive agricultural land
- The most biologically important and ecologically sensitive areas
- The parks and playgrounds enjoyed by residents throughout the state
- Irreplaceable cultural and historic resources

The programs funded by the transfer tax all allow solar energy for on-site use. This legislation would allow community solar and commercial and industrial scale solar on these lands, thereby compromising the very resources that make Maryland a national leader in land preservation.



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