

HOUSE BILL 1265

L6, M5

4lr2657
CF SB 1054

By: **Delegate Fraser–Hidalgo**

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2024

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Local Government – Building Permits for Residential Solar Energy and**
3 **Residential Energy Storage Systems – Required Platform and Inspections**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a county or municipality to implement a certain web-based
5 platform for features supporting the tracking and approval of residential building
6 permits for certain residential solar energy projects, residential energy storage
7 projects, and main electric panel alterations by a certain date except under certain
8 circumstances; requiring a county or municipality to adopt certain procedures for
9 required inspections for a certain building permit under certain circumstances;
10 requiring a county or municipality to certify to the Maryland Energy Administration
11 compliance with certain laws when applying for funding from the Administration;
12 authorizing the Administration to require a county or municipality to meet certain
13 requirements before receiving certain funds; and generally relating to the use of
14 SolarAPP+ and the processing of building permits by counties and municipalities.

15 BY adding to
16 Article – Local Government
17 Section 1–1319
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2013 Volume and 2023 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Local Government**

23 **1–1319.**

24 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
25 **INDICATED.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2) "ADMINISTRATION" MEANS THE MARYLAND ENERGY ADMINISTRATION.

(3) "RESIDENTIAL ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM" MEANS A SYSTEM, ON A RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF THE METER, USED TO STORE ELECTRICAL ENERGY, OR MECHANICAL, CHEMICAL, OR THERMAL ENERGY THAT WAS ONCE ELECTRICAL ENERGY, FOR USE AS ELECTRICAL ENERGY AT A LATER DATE OR IN A PROCESS THAT OFFSETS ELECTRICITY USE AT PEAK TIMES.

(4) "RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM" MEANS ANY CONFIGURATION OF SOLAR ENERGY DEVICES THAT COLLECTS AND DISTRIBUTES SOLAR ENERGY FOR THE PURPOSE OF GENERATING ELECTRICITY AND THAT HAS A SINGLE RESIDENTIAL INTERCONNECTION WITH THE ELECTRICAL GRID.

(5) "SOLARAPP+" MEANS THE MOST RECENT VERSION OF A WEB-BASED PLATFORM, DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY, THAT PROVIDES A STANDARD PORTAL FOR RECEIVING AND PROCESSING RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM AND RESIDENTIAL ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM PERMIT INFORMATION.

(B) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES.

(C) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION, ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 1, 2025, EACH COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITY SHALL IMPLEMENT SOLARAPP+ FOR FEATURES SUPPORTING THE TRACKING AND APPROVAL OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS FOR:

(1) RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS;

(2) RESIDENTIAL ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS;

(3) MAIN ELECTRIC PANEL UPGRADES; AND

(4) MAIN ELECTRIC PANEL DERATES.

(D) (1) THIS SUBSECTION APPLIES ONLY TO THE APPROVAL PROCESS FOR PERMITS THAT ARE PROCESSED THROUGH SOLARAPP+.

(2) (I) A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY SHALL AUTHORIZE ANY INSPECTIONS REQUIRED FOR A PERMIT TO BE CONDUCTED REMOTELY THROUGH AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

- 1 1. REAL-TIME VIDEO;
- 2 2. RECORDED VIDEO; OR
- 3 3. PHOTOGRAPH.

4 (II) A REMOTE INSPECTION CONDUCTED UNDER THIS
5 SUBSECTION MAY NOT COST MORE THAN, AND SHALL BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE
6 SAME TIME FRAME AS, AN IN-PERSON INSPECTION.

7 (3) A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY MAY NOT REQUIRE AN INSPECTION
8 REQUIRED FOR A PERMIT TO BE CONDUCTED MORE THAN ONCE.

9 (4) A PERMIT IS DEEMED APPROVED IF AN INSPECTION REQUIRED
10 FOR THE PERMIT IS NOT COMPLETED WITHIN 10 BUSINESS DAYS FOLLOWING THE
11 COUNTY'S OR MUNICIPALITY'S RECEIPT OF THE PERMIT APPLICATION.

12 (E) (1) BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2025, WHEN APPLYING FOR FUNDING
13 FROM THE ADMINISTRATION A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY SHALL CERTIFY TO THE
14 ADMINISTRATION THAT IT COMPLIES WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (C)
15 OF THIS SECTION.

16 (2) THE ADMINISTRATION MAY IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON OR DENY
17 DIRECT FUNDING FROM ANY ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM TO A COUNTY OR
18 MUNICIPALITY IF THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THIS
19 SECTION.

20 (F) THE ADMINISTRATION MAY DELAY THE INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION OR
21 SUSPEND THE REQUIREMENT OF SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION IF THERE ARE
22 INSUFFICIENT STATE OR FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE ADMINISTRATION TO
23 PROVIDE FINANCIAL OR TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY
24 IMPLEMENTING SOLARAPP+.

25 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
26 October 1, 2024.