

# INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

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November 16, 2023

To: Paul Pinsky, Director of the Maryland Energy Administration & Members of the Task Force to Study Solar Incentives

Re: Inclusion of Prevailing Wage Requirements for all New Solar Projects 1MW and above.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Task Force to Study Solar Incentives and for the invitation to share my policy recommendations. I am writing on behalf of the over 11,000 Maryland residents who are members of the IBEW to advocate for the inclusion of prevailing wage requirements on all new solar work 1MW and above. We request these requirements be included in the Task Forces' report to the General Assembly.

The transformation of our energy economy provides us with an opportunity to build the middle class. To harness this opportunity, we must get policies right. If we don't explicitly address wages and benefits in policy as we grow these emerging industries, we risk a race to the bottom. Specifically, incentives in the solar industry should be accompanied by requirements for family sustaining jobs with access to healthcare and training as part of our efforts. We were pleased to see that such wage requirements were codified for community solar projects in HB908 during the 2023 Legislative Session. We suggest consistency with this law for all solar projects 1MW or above.

In addition to ensuring family sustaining wages, prevailing wage statutes require apprenticeships for workers who are not journey level workers in their craft. This assures proper jobsite supervision and increased safety for all labor on these projects. In addition, associated classroom training helps Marylanders achieve access to a lifelong career, not just a job. IBEW Local 24 is proud of our apprenticeship program, which just received the Apprenticeship Champion Award from the Maryland Department of Labor. Our participants are among the more than 1,400 apprentices in IBEW registered training programs across the state of Maryland. We look forward to continued work in partnership with the solar industry to ensure those working on these important projects are well trained and maintain the highest levels of safety.

Please feel free to reach out if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Michael J. McHale

Business Manager