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

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: Opposition for Requiring Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) for New Solar Projects
Over 500kW-AC

As the Task Force to Study Solar Incentives continues to meet, Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake expresses its opposition to the inclusion of a PLA requirement under the Family Sustaining Jobs section of the Maryland Solar Program Transition Blueprint. The PLA requirement for projects over 500kW-AC is above and beyond what is required in the Federal Inflation Reduction Act. In fact, the Inflation Reduction Act requires the paying of prevailing wages. All solar workers will receive good wages on these federally funded projects.

IEC Chesapeake opposes the PLA mandate since more than eighty percent (80%) of construction workers in Maryland do not belong to a labor union. It is unfair and unwise public policy to exclude merit shop contractors from working on large solar projects in Maryland. It is important to note that most minority contractors do not operate under a labor union business model. In addition, most solar installers are not union workers.

As Maryland enters tenuous economic conditions with a projected State budget deficit, it is detrimental to add a requirement that will add costs to solar projects in Maryland. As the Task Force continues to deliberate, please keep in mind IEC Chesapeake's concerns opposing PLAs.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Grant Shmelzer, Executive Director of IEC Chesapeake, at 1-301-621-9545, extension 114 or at gshmelzer@iec-chesapeake.com or Kevin O'Keefe at 410-382-7844 or at kevin@kokeeffelaw.com.

About Us

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents members throughout Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Our headquarters are located in Laurel, Maryland. IEC Chesapeake has an extensive apprenticeship program for training electricians. In addition, IEC Chesapeake promotes green economic growth by providing education and working with contractor members, industry partners, government policy makers and inspectors to increase the use of renewable energy.

