OLR Bill Analysis
SB 468

AN ACT CONCERNING THE INSTALLATION OF CLASS I RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES ON STATE LAND NEAR PUBLIC HIGHWAYS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) commissioners, in consultation with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioner, by January 1, 2020, to develop (1) an inventory of state-owned land in proximity to public highways suitable to site and install solar Class I renewable energy resources and (2) standards and procedures for siting such resources. They must also establish a setback distance from roadways that provides for motorist safety. The bill allows the commissioners to include non-solar Class I resources (e.g., wind) in the land inventory and requires them to develop siting standards and procedures and establish a setback distance for these resources if they are included in the inventory.

The bill also requires the commissioners, in consultation with the DAS commissioner, by January 1, 2020, to develop and implement a plan that includes one or more finance models to install 10 megawatts (MW) of Class I renewable energy sources per year for 10 years. Under the bill, DAS and DEEP must each adopt regulations implementing the bill’s requirements on the land inventory, siting standards and procedures, setback distances, and the plan.

The bill requires the DEEP commissioner to issue a request for proposals in accordance with (1) finance models included under the plan developed by the commissioners and (2) DEEP and DOT regulations adopted under the bill. She must do so annually, beginning by January 1, 2020, and continuing for 10 years.

The bill allows the DEEP and DOT commissioners to revise or
update the land inventory after January 1, 2020. Beginning by January 1, 2020, the bill requires the commissioners to report every two years to the Energy and Technology and Transportation committees on the status of the land inventory, siting standards and procedures, setback distances, and the financing plan.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

LAND INVENTORY
In developing the land inventory, the bill requires the commissioners to consider related practices, standards, and inventories or surveys developed in other states.

FINANCING PLAN
The bill requires the commissioners to develop and implement a plan to simultaneously provide any necessary financing to ensure installation of Class I energy sources on state-owned land in proximity to public highways while also maximizing related revenues to the state. Under the bill, the commissioners must consider options including (1) leasing state-owned land to people to install and operate such energy sources and (2) direct state ownership of Class I renewable energy sources.

COMMITTEE ACTION
Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 22  Nay 2  (03/14/2019)