

HB 169: Breach of a Covenant for Bona Fide Conservation Use Related to Solar Generation of Energy

Legislative Rubric from Science for Georgia

[HB 169](#) attempts to eliminate favorable treatment of farmers or forestland owners who breach a covenant on part of their land for solar. Currently, farmers receive money from the state to ease their tax burden. If they replace their farmland with solar panels, they lose the tax incentives on that parcel of land only. With this bill, they would lose all of their tax incentives on all of their land.

Criteria	Variables			
Impact Who is going to be impacted? Is it equitable? List stakeholders & opinions.	Negative		Positive	
	This bill impacts farmers who want to add solar panels to part of their farmland. After July 1, 2025, if they have covenants for bona fide conservation use and forest land use conservation with the government, those covenants will be cancelled on all of their lands. This change will disincentive farmers from wanting to place solar panels on their land and prevent greater transition to clean energy.			
Reach Does it reach its target audience?	0 - No impact on target audience.	1 - Impacts narrow segment.	2 - Impacts majority; exceptions.	3 - Impacts entire target audience
	This bill harms farmers who may decide to add solar panels to their farms in the future, which many do to supplement their income. This restriction prevents farmers from gaining more autonomy over their power supply and undermines efforts to encourage clean air initiatives.			
Scientific Merit Does it utilize scientific research accurately?	YES - this does follow scientific research accurately. Here's why....		NO - this does not present scientific research accurately.	
	No, this bill does present scientific research accurately because research indicated that solar panels can improve crop production and reduce irrigation . Shade from the solar panels helps the soil retain water . Solar panels also protect crops from hailstorms and bad weather . There is also data to suggest that solar farms do not have a direct positive or negative spillover effect on nearby agricultural land values.			
Financial Feasibility Is it financially feasible? or does this have burdensome finances (higher taxes, future costs, etc)?	0 - Extremely high costs	1 - Expensive but can be done	2 - Slight	3 - No financial burden
	This bill does need funding.			
Political Feasibility Level of opposition and partisan disagreement.	0 - Majority disagreed, regardless of party.	1 - Split along party lines	2 - Minimal Opposition	3 - Complete consensus (zero to five 'Nays').
	Unknown. This bill has 6 sponsors, all Republicans.			

Measurable Metrics? We recommend looking at these 3 metrics. Is the data available or being measured?	0 - no data	1 - some data / not accessible	2 - most data / somewhat accessible	3 - complete transparency
There is research disproving the necessity of such a bill. Most research encourages an initiative for solar panels on farmland.				