H.710

Senator Watson moves that the report of the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy be amended by inserting a new section to be Sec. 2a to read as follows:

Sec. 2a. PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL SOILS AND SOLAR REPORT

(a) On or before January 15, 2027, the Commissioner of Public Service, after consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, shall report back on the following questions:

(1) Over the last five years, how many acres of primary agricultural soils have been developed for any purpose? What share of this development is attributable to solar energy generation projects eligible for Tier II of the Renewable Energy Standard?

(2) How many acres of primary agricultural soils used for solar energy generation development were directly impacted by the project, as opposed to the acreage that is within the project's area of disturbance?

(3) How many acres of primary agricultural soils developed for solar energy generation were in active agricultural use immediately before development, and what was the agricultural usage?

(4) How many acres of primary agricultural soils developed for solar remain owned by farmers?

(5) How many acres of trees have been cleared for solar energy generation projects eligible for Tier II of the Renewable Energy Standard in this time frame, broken down by forest type?

(b) The Commissioner shall include in the report recommendations on how to encourage the siting of solar energy generation on land that has already been disturbed, including rooftops and parking lots, and potential financial structures that would make solar energy generation on those sites more financially feasible.

(c) The report shall be submitted to the House Committees on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and on Energy and Digital Infrastructure and the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Natural Resources and Energy.