

Dear Honorable Members of the Conference Committee,

Thank you for your work this session and for moving us closer to meeting our climate goals. S.2842 and H.4524 both contain policies that are essential for aligning the state's emission reduction targets with those laid out in the *Next-Generation Climate Roadmap Act*.

We hope the Conference Committee will include the following provisions in the final legislation.

We ask you to support sections that make progress in the following areas:

- Power, Transmission, and Storage (S.2842 Section 68, H.4524 Sections 17, 20, 25)
- Electric Vehicles (S.2842 Sections 34, 57, 67, 73 and 74)
- Buildings (S.2842 Sections 10, 15, 65)
- Environmental Justice (S.2842 Section 76)
- MassCEC Funding (S.2842 Section 19, H.4524 Sections 13 and 14)

Power, Transmission, and Storage

As more sectors of the economy electrify, generating enough clean electricity is essential. That is why it is important that biomass is reclassified, the offshore wind buildout is supported, transmission is upgraded, and our power storage capacity is increased. The sections listed below have our support because they will move the Commonwealth toward these goals.

Removing new biomass facilities from qualifying in renewable energy-related programs as is done in several sections of S.2842 is a positive development for evidence-based climate policy.

Section 68 of S.2842, asking DOER to aim for 10,000 MW of offshore wind generation by 2035, is a welcome addition. However, we suggest this should be made part of DOER's mandate rather than a goal. This change would strengthen the legislation and ensure the Commonwealth's wind power supply matches future demand for affordable, local, and clean electricity.

Section 20 of H.4524 would reduce the instances in which the offshore wind price cap would come into effect. We support Section 20 because while it made sense for a nascent economic sector to cap new offshore wind procurements below the price of past procurements, it is unrealistic to expect any industry to reduce costs indefinitely.

In addition to energy generation, the energy transition depends on adequate transmission infrastructure capable of reliably supplying renewable power to customers. We support the measures in H.4524 to manage this issue, including Section 17 which directs electricity companies to plan needed investments in the grid while creating multiple levels of public

oversight so costs remain low and social benefits remain high.

Section 25 of H.4524 addresses the state's need for energy storage by initiating the study and possible procurement of energy storage capacity. This is an important first step in this policy area and should make it into law.

Electric Vehicles

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas pollution in Massachusetts, accounting for 44% of emissions. S.2842 takes many positive steps toward this goal through incentive programs, regulations, and the creation of coordinating bodies. While these measures will reduce emissions from passenger vehicles, the bill could be strengthened by adding equally strong sets of incentives, programs, and mandates for buses and other transportation vehicles.

S.2842 supports EV infrastructure by creating a coordinating body to oversee the development of charging infrastructure and provide funding for that mission in Sections 57 and 67. We ask these sections, or measures similar, to be passed into law in order to enable widespread EV adoption in the Commonwealth.

In addition, we strongly support Section 34 of S.2842, which provides rebates of \$1,500 for low-income individuals buying EVs. This section makes the EV rebate program more economically progressive and can play a role in reducing air pollution in environmental justice communities.

When it comes to reducing emissions from buses, S.2842 could be improved. While several sections give the MBTA a clear path toward electrification, they leave out other bus operators. Sections 73 and 74 of S.2842 represent a starting point for decarbonizing the Commonwealth's school and transit bus fleets but these sections need funding. Including buses in EV and charging infrastructure rebate programs would not only lower the Commonwealth's greenhouse gas emissions but, due to electric buses' lower lifetime operating costs, will also provide long-term financial savings for school districts and transit authorities.

Buildings

Building electrification is critical for both environmental and economic benefits. S.2842 has several provisions that move us in the right direction, including Sections 10 and 15, which if implemented, would reduce the amount of state energy efficiency funds that could be devoted to new fossil fuel infrastructure.

Section 65 of S.2842 allows 10 municipalities to require full electrification of new buildings. We believe that capping the program at 10 municipalities deprives towns of making local decisions where actions can best reflect the needs of a community. The cap would deprive towns of their ability to make decisions at the most local form of government, where actions

can best reflect the needs of a community. Passing Section 65 into law as written is better than the status quo, however, removing the cap would increase the impact of that section.

Environmental Justice

Some communities have long been home to a disproportionate number of polluting facilities. Section 76 of S.2842, if passed, would help reduce this inequity through increased research and planning. The section would increase air quality monitoring in heavily burdened neighborhoods. It would also mandate reports laying out pathways to cut the air pollution in those communities.

MassCEC Funding

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center will require more than its current level of funding to successfully meet its mandates in areas ranging from workforce development to clean technology research. We support both the long-term funding provided by Section 13 and 14 of H.4524 and the one-time infusion of \$100 million through the Clean Energy Investment Fund created in Section 19 of S.2842.

Future Legislation

While the legislation before the conference committee covers many avenues for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we believe the following critical areas for funding proposed initiatives have been missed. We ask that in future legislation you include:

- A Green Bank as proposed by H.3340, *An Act creating a green bank to promote clean energy in Massachusetts*. Green Banks have a long track record in states such as Connecticut in providing cost-effective financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, especially to environmental justice communities commonly underserved by financial institutions.
- An economy-wide fee on carbon pollution indexed to hitting our greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, with provisions to hold low and moderate-income households financially harmless, such as the described in the *Green Future Act*, H.3292.

Thank you for considering the benefits of the provisions outlined above.

Sincerely,

The Green Future Now Coalition

Green Future Now is a coalition of 42 environmental and community groups from across Massachusetts. Our members and values can be found here:

<https://www.greenfuturenowma.org/about>