



June 10, 2022

Honorable Chair Jeffrey Roy
Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy
Room 43
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Roy,

Vote Solar applauds both the Senate and House on their strong efforts to advance the Commonwealth's climate goals. We feel that there are a variety of opportunities to advance the Commonwealth's climate goals, both as part of bills currently in conference, and other legislation currently/recently under consideration. Broadly, Vote Solar supports the most strident effort to transform Massachusetts' economy and energy systems - we believe that deep, upfront investment in our homes as well as our local energy grids and generation system can deliver for Bay Staters' health and wallet, and prepare us for the best climate future possible.

Climate Conference Committee

Vote Solar generally supports the passage of a climate omnibus bill that includes elements of both house bills currently in conference. In particular, we are most excited about the following provisions:

House Bill provisions (H.4524)

- Creation of a non-adversarial multi-stakeholder Grid Modernization Steering Committee: Vote Solar supports the creation of a grid modernization steering committee, and we are supportive of the goals and process prescribed in the House bill. We feel that creating a non-adversarial multi-stakeholder forum for devising grid-modernization – in particular to accommodate distributed as well as large-scale renewables – is a crucial step in moving the commonwealth to an 100% clean energy future. Further, we believe that DPU is a sufficient check to the EDC prerogative to build and rate-base new physical infrastructure.

Senate Bill S.2842

- Revisions to the statewide net metering cap to include Class I systems up to 25Kw nameplate capacity, as well as all Class II and Class III systems. This closes loopholes

in current net metering policy and allows more systems to access the super-simple and robust net metering policy.

- Revisions to the solar Parcel Rule to allow more systems access to Net Metering where multiple systems exist on a single parcel of land. This removes red tape and allows for more solar where the landowner is interested in supporting it.
- Directing DOER to create a new tariff-based solar valuation policy as a successor to the SMART program. Tariffs allow for more durable, consistent signals to solar builders and customers, and support long-term growth of the market versus the shorter-interval and inconsistently allocated block incentives.
- Banning third-party energy suppliers from selling to residential customers - this protects customers from exploitative and unproductive third party vendors.
- Establishing a clean buildings municipal pilot program. Allowing municipalities to opt into carbon-free building can set an example for their neighbors (we also support a full ban on fossil fuels in new builds)
- Convening of a technical advisory committee on air quality and air monitoring. Air quality is a key metric for public health, and is a

Bills we support:

Vote Solar supports H.3288/S.2136 the 100% Clean Act, and its composite provisions

- Creating binding decarbonization targets that reflect climate science in the buildings, transport and energy generation sector are critical to setting policies that meet those goals.
- In addition, Vote Solar would emphasize our support for the formation of an Office of Clean Energy Equity, which would create a dedicated body within EEA to ensure the state's energy policies are fairly treating members of EJ communities.
- We also support the requirement that benefits of clean energy programming are allocated to EJ communities proportionally to their population statewide.

Vote Solar supports affirmative social equity safeguards in public investment in the clean energy economy and the energy transition. We believe such a mandate is key to hold the state accountable for investing in EJ communities, black, brown, and low income communities across the Commonwealth. Other jurisdictions and the federal government have adopted "Justice 40" provisions to ensure that state funds are allocated fairly, and that programs are designed to deliver benefits to where they make the biggest difference. Massachusetts could and should adopt similar provisions.

S.2180 / H.4044 an Act Supporting Solar Energy Development in the Commonwealth

As the Commonwealth and region act to rapidly decarbonize economy wide, our energy system must be the first domino to fall. Measures that align state efforts to deploy solar will allow our

grid to work as dynamically and efficiently as possible, while continuing to drive economic well-being that the Commonwealth sorely needs in the form of jobs and bill savings. Specifically to the bill we support:

- Year-over-year distributed solar interconnection targets to 2030;
- inclusion of municipal solar planning into the Green Communities Act;
- an affirmative creation of an updated solar tariff system by DOER to facilitate the fair and durable valuation of local-scale solar generation.
- Additionally, Vote Solar supports inclusion of EJ, renters in stakeholder group as part of green communities solar planning stakeholder group. We feel these interests are key role to play in creating fair, workable plans, and ensuring that meaningful input

Buildings Justice with Jobs Act H.3365/S.2226

- Creation of a buildings justice taskforce
- Creation of a plan to retrofit one million households over ten years
- Requirements to include renter-occupied buildings in policy design
- Income-based support for building retrofits and hazard remediation
- Fair labor agreements

Vote Solar believes that the clean energy transition is a core component in the continued economic well-being of the Commonwealth, particularly in the face of extreme weather and energy challenges that threaten human health and prosperity. Leveraging the Commonwealth's fiscal might to support investments in building retrofits is an important element of the state's economic future - both for the work and jobs it will create, but also for the expanded suite of benefits to recipients. It's well documented that safer, healthier, more affordable homes help eliminate externalized costs such as hospital care, missed work, and poor performance in school. Vote Solar feels that economic development funds should be allocated to existing pots including the CEC, and in particular that funding for deep energy retrofits should be prioritized.

H. 3336, *An Act Relating to Energy Facilities Siting Reform to Address Environmental Justice, Climate, and Public Health*

- Vote Solar supports the bill's emphasis on a more stringent and accountable process when siting energy infrastructure that can negatively impact the health and well-being of frontline communities.
- Vote Solar believes that the bill could be tweaked to distinguish between (and provide different processes regarding) clean energy projects that do not risk the harms the bill seeks to avoid.

Vote Solar looks forward to further engagement with your office on the above issues, and we are available to discuss the details of particular provisions of the bills referenced at your convenience

Very best,

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