



AN ACT RELATIVE TO SOLAR POWER IN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

S. 1831 sponsored by Sen. Chang-Díaz, and H. 3396 sponsored by Rep. Holmes, Rep. Dubois

Massachusetts communities are swiftly transitioning to renewable energy. This power shift comes with great advantages, cleaning our air, creating local jobs and reclaiming billions of energy dollars that would otherwise go out of state. Yet not all communities have access to affordable renewable energy. Renters, low-moderate income residents, people who lack adequate credit and anyone who lives under a shaded roof face difficulty in accessing solar.

To ensure solar is working for all communities, Massachusetts must (1) **eliminate barriers to the development of community and low-moderate income solar** and (2) **Assure meaningful savings for low-moderate income solar customers and renters.**

This legislation seeks to ensure all communities can access solar energy by providing:

Fair compensation: Renters and low-moderate income residents receive a compensation rate equal to that received by homeowners when buying into low-income solar or solar in environmental justice communities.

Removal of Barriers: Lifts public and private net metering cap by 5%.

Incentivizing Equity: Encourages developers to build community, low-income solar by creating a carve-out in any future solar incentive program.

Public Low-Income Solar: Municipal solar, which currently gets retail compensation, remains at retail when delivering savings to private low-income customers.

Additional issues facing solar:

In January 2018, the MA Department of Public Utilities ignited controversy when it issued a first-in-the-nation “demand charge” or fee on residential solar. DPU did not consider the benefits of solar, such as savings on fuel costs or avoided expenses on new power lines, only the costs. *The legislature should ensure any valuation of solar energy considers the actual benefits of solar, and should strike out the fee on solar approved by DPU.*

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