New York Solar Industry Development and Jobs Act

S.4178 (Maziarz) "same as" A.5713 (Englebright)

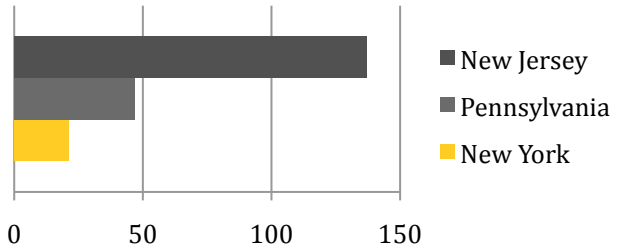
Goal: Enable the development of a robust solar power market in New York State to drive local job and economic opportunity and secure a leadership position in the nation's growing renewable energy industry.

Background: Across the country and around the world, the race is on to build solar power markets - vibrant new hubs of job creation, renewed investment and economic opportunity. Despite tremendous in-state growth potential and a good solar resource, New York's installed photovoltaic (PV) capacity represents less than 3% of the national share, or approximately 54 MW.*

Although New York has taken important early steps to deploy solar, its commitments fall far short of neighboring states' market development policies. For example, New Jersey has a goal to achieve over 5,000 MW of new solar capacity by 2026. It added 137.1 MW of new PV in 2010 alone, more than double New York's entire installed solar capacity.

New York can and should use cost-effective policies to go further. If the state does not move to remain competitive as others like New Jersey move forward along their strong growth trajectories, New York will miss tremendous economic and environmental benefits.

Actual 2010 Solar PV Installations (MW)*



Outcome: The New York Solar Jobs Act would send a clear signal to the global solar industry that New York is open for business. If enacted in its current form, the bill would set a solar target of 5,000 MW by 2026, which is enough to power 500,000 average households and equivalent to 3% of the state's total electric load. It would also chart a course to achieve that impressive solar end goal at minimum cost and maximum benefit to New York ratepayers.

The New York Solar Jobs Act would:

Create more than 22,000 new local jobs

Generate $20 Billion in economic output

Cost only 39¢ per month on the avg. NY residential utility bill

(Jobs & Economic analysis based on the NREL JEDI model; Rate Impact analysis from CrossBorder Energy)

An investment in NY solar is an investment in the NY economy: New York's solar economic opportunity is both significant and immediate. Solar creates more jobs per megawatt-hour than any other energy resource. These are high quality jobs across a broad range of education requirements, salary levels and fields. The majority (approximately 75%) are related to development and installation, representing local jobs that are virtually nonoutsourceable.

Investment in solar today ensures that energy dollars stay in New York and deliver solid economic returns for decades to come.

* Source: SEIA/GTM Research U.S. Solar Market Insight Year in Review 2010

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How It Works: The New York Solar Jobs act builds on proven best practices and lessons learned from other states to deliver high solar benefit at high value to New York ratepayers.

Scalability: The legislation sets forth a smooth, aggressive-but-achievable growth pathway to make solar PV a core component of New York's clean energy future (see chart below). Retail electric suppliers, LIPA and NYPA each have separate obligations (in terms of percent of annual load) with respect to achieving the overall solar goal.

Diversity: This legislation supports a broad spectrum of business models and technologies to serve the residential, commercial and utility sectors. This design feature enables diverse participation and supports a strong, competitive local solar market.

Electric Consumer Protection: The If the aggregate cost of procuring solar power under the program surpasses 1.5 percent of the annual retail electricity revenues of retail electric suppliers or LIPA for any given year, a price collar will go into effect, holding all ESCO and utility or LIPA SREC procurement obligations, as applicable, at that year's level until the aggregate cost of solar power again decreases.

Transparency: The Public Service Commission (PSC), LIPA and NYPA must report annually to the governor and legislature on the progress toward the interim program goals. Additionally, utilities must submit to the PSC for review and approval their solicitation and procurement plans for achieving their obligations. LIPA and NYPA must also submit to the governor, comptroller, and the legislature, and make publicly available, their plans for achieving their obligations.
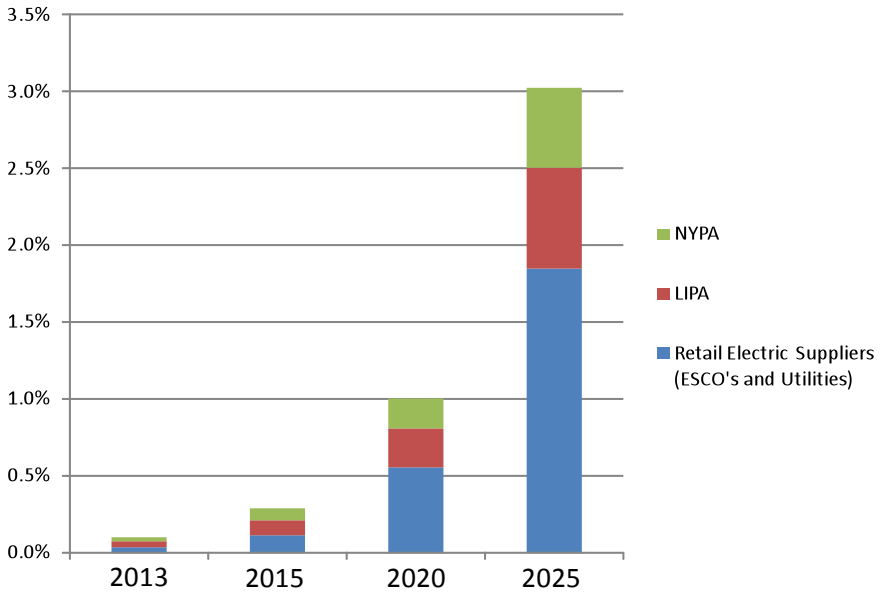
Chart: New York Solar Jobs Act solar power production targets as a percentage of total statewide energy sales.