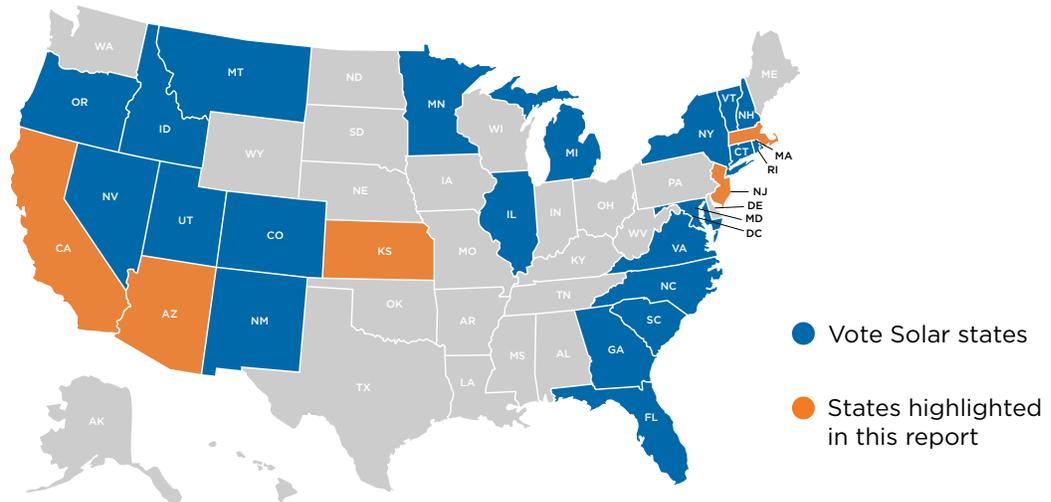


Q2 2020: IMPACT REPORT

Powering Clean Energy Progress Across the U.S.

VOTE SOLAR



NATIONAL

THE FIGHT TO SAVE NET METERING

In April, the New England Ratepayers Association (NERA), a shadowy special interest group, filed a petition with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that would fundamentally change the economics of rooftop solar. If passed, this proposal would effectively end net metering as we know it. With the states' rights to regulate net metering nationwide under threat (which could impact 2.2 million households and 100,000 businesses), Vote Solar leapt into action. We mobilized a nationwide, bipartisan campaign—including direct intervention and working to ensure that state governments understood the stakes and pushed back.

Our efforts resulted in overwhelming opposition to NERA's petition from the following stakeholders:

30 Public Utility Commissions	9 Associations of State Regulators and Public Electricity Providers	539 Legal Experts, Academics, Advocacy Groups
74 Governors, Attorneys General, State Officials	35 Members of Congress	56,605 Individuals through the SaveSolar website

The public comment period has closed, but we will keep the spotlight trained on why NERA's petition would be devastating to solar, jobs, and states' rights.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

We are hard at work exploring the best pathways to deal with the damage wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we generally do not engage at the federal level, given the magnitude of this crisis, we authored [a federal memo to Congress](#) to outline our suggestions for potential stimulus funds.

Our approach to this crisis has been two-fold. First, help the most impacted, and next, catalyze an equitable green recovery to build just, resilient and healthy communities. With the heart of our work being state-based advocacy, we recently released a white paper entitled, [Solar as a Solution: COVID-19 State Response Memo](#).

Vote Solar's primary policy recommendations include:

-  **Provide utility bill relief and energy burden reduction**
-  **Rebuild better: 100% just clean energy resilience**
-  **Energy justice**
-  **Create new pathways to the clean energy workforce**

BY STATE

1 ARIZONA

Arizonans have spoken: they want clean energy and they want the Arizona Corporation Commission to act *now*. The results of our recent poll in Arizona found overwhelming support for clean energy. Seventy-seven percent of respondents thought it was important to pass 100% clean energy legislation during the pandemic. Significantly, a bipartisan majority of 68% of Arizonans support utility companies investing in economic development, access to renewables, workforce training, and local siting of renewable energy projects in communities harmed by dirty energy.

2 CALIFORNIA

In anticipation of severe fire seasons resulting in, now regular, power shut-offs, we have been pushing for the establishment of clean, community-led microgrids. As part of this push, the California Public Utilities Commission recently approved a series of policies that will enable more customers to use local solar + storage and create islands of resilience. This also includes a new mandate to share critical utility data with local and tribal governments—despite strong utility opposition—that will empower localities to take a hyper-local, bottom-up approach to safeguarding their communities.

3 KANSAS

The favorable ruling from the Kansas Supreme Court on discriminatory charges for solar customers is a big win for rooftop solar. A fight we began in 2019 came to a conclusion this year when the Court prohibited utilities from charging customers who generate their own electricity more than non-generating customers, calling it, ‘simply price discrimination.’

4 MASSACHUSETTS

After years of advocacy, we welcomed the new SMART program regulations released by the MA Department of Energy Resources. These changes to the Commonwealth’s central solar incentive program will now help to drive enough solar energy to power more than 250,000 homes. Although incremental, these changes are steps in the right direction to revitalize the Commonwealth’s transition to clean energy with a particular focus on expanding solar benefits to low-income communities.

5 NEW JERSEY

Our hard work over the last two years paid off in New Jersey with the introduction of the [NJ Clean Energy Equity Act](#). As the sponsor Sen. Troy Singleton wrote, the Act prioritizes environmental justice communities in the need to “[build back better through energy security, resilience, and energy affordability well beyond the current crisis.](#)” Soon after the bill was introduced, with our help, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities announced the creation of the Office of Clean Energy Equity--the first provision in the NJ Clean Energy Equity Act, and the first of its kind nationally. In further positive news from the Garden State, the NJ Department of Economic Development announced the development of a Green Bank, a financial entity we pushed for in our roadmap published earlier this year.

SOLAR ACCESS & EQUITY IN FOCUS: THE UTILITY BILL DEBT CRISIS

With massive job losses due to COVID-19, millions of households are struggling to pay for basic utilities. Data on utility disconnections and arrearages is almost non-existent, leaving little understanding of the scale of the problem. This is why we published a white paper, [COVID-19 and the Utility Bill Debt Crisis](#), projecting that national utility debt may total over \$26 billion over just four months of the pandemic. We continue to work on multiple fronts to ensure that households do not lose access, including seeking extensions on shut-off moratoriums enacted by states (e.g. with the North Carolina Justice Center, we obtained a sixty-day extension on the shut-off moratorium in the state). And preventing shutoffs only solves half of the energy burden problem; we will be negotiating with utilities to offer innovative repayment plans that give struggling families the ability to significantly lower costs through distributed clean energy and energy efficiency programs. Congress included a nationwide moratorium on shut-offs as part of the Heroes Act, a result that was due, in part, to our vocal support.