

UNLOCKING LOW-INCOME ACCESS TO SOLAR

Equitable solar policies are mission-critical to the industry's long-term success

MARKET OPPORTUNITY:



6 MILLION AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS¹



22 MILLION OWNER-OCCUPIED LOW-INCOME HOMES²

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE LOW-INCOME SOLAR POLICIES:

Accessibility and Affordability

Real energy cost savings from day one

Community Engagement

Buy-in and participation from community stakeholders

Consumer Protection

Ensure maximum protection for vulnerable population

Sustainability and Flexibility

Create long-term market viability

Compatibility and Integration

Add to, don't undermine, existing clean energy and low-income assistance programs

SUCCESSFUL MODELS:



California has served over 6000 low-income single-family homeowners through its SASH Program and over 6,770 affordable tenant units are participating in Virtual Net Metering thanks to the MASH program.³



Massachusetts provides loans that are cash-flow positive from day one, and provide risk protection for lenders who offer these loans to homeowners with lower credit ratings.



Colorado is a community solar leader and is pioneering dedicated low-income community solar projects in partnership with utilities.



Demand for **Washington, D.C.'s** Affordable Solar Program is very high and the program will serve 140 homes in fiscal year 2016.

KEY BARRIERS TO ADDRESS:

COST SENSITIVITY & ACCESS TO FINANCING

Mechanisms like rebates and net metering buy down the up-front and longer term costs and compensate customers for the solar they produce. Guarantees for lenders can reduce the barriers to borrowing.

HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS & OTHER PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Community/shared solar programs and investments in solar for multifamily affordable housing allow participation from those who don't own suitable rooftops.

HOUSING CONDITIONS

Programs that address energy efficiency and home repairs simultaneously open older homes to solar.

MARKET FORCES

Focused marketing and sales efforts combined with strong engagement of existing community groups are necessary to successfully educate and recruit customers who have not been active in the market.



1. <http://www.preservationdatabase.org/summaryreport.php>

2. GRID Alternatives' analysis for United States Census 2010 data based on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's definition of low-income.

3. <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/General.aspx?id=3752>

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