



VOTE SOLAR 2019 IMPACT REPORT



VOTE SOLAR

Letter from the Executive Director:



As you think back over all that's happened in climate and environmental news in 2019, you'd be forgiven for throwing up your hands in despair. The Trump Administration has pulled the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Accords, turned the EPA over to coal industry lobbyists who are torching environmental regulations, and the continuing gridlock out of Congress shows no evidence of relief on the horizon.

And this shameful dereliction of care is happening at the same time as massive wildfires, devastating floods, intense hurricanes, and disappearing glaciers. The last time atmospheric carbon levels were this high, sea levels were between 30-60 feet higher. Sleep tight.

But here's a stat that will give you hope: one in every four people in this country live in a state where carbon-based electricity must be phased out, by law, largely to be replaced by renewables. Six states, plus Washington, DC and Puerto Rico, have established 100% clean electricity requirements, with four of those passing in 2019.

It's an incredible achievement and I would argue the most important climate success this country has ever seen.

Why is this happening now? We're at a nexus of three powerful trends. A trifecta of compelling economics, great politics, and winnable venues.

- Solar and wind are now, in many places, the cheapest sources of energy generation. Battery storage, a key part of maintaining reliability, has come down in price by 71% over the past 10 years, and will continue to fall. With current costs, at least half of the existing coal generation in the U.S. is uneconomic. We're working hard to make sure that coal is replaced by clean energy.
- Supermajorities of Americans, across all political parties want to see a transition to renewables. This makes for great politics. In 2018, 1,400 candidates ran on a 100% clean electricity platform. Eight of whom are now governors. In 2019, we worked hard to build the grassroots army of solar voices, and turn that latent power into market-making policy.
- Vote Solar works at the state level, because that's where most decisions about electricity are made. Making change in Congress is brutal, but state governments are much closer to democracy. Vote Solar's team is now 33 people strong, working in front of Public Utility Commissions and state legislatures in 26 states to deliver these substantial wins.

Going forward, we're working to make sure that our energy system is not only clean, but also more just and equitable. As we look to remake America's energy system from one based on polluting fossil fuels to one based on clean energy, we have an opportunity to make sure that it serves everybody. As we advocate for change, everyone must see themselves, and how they benefit, in the future we hope to build. The more problems we solve, the more partners we have. The more robust our vision, the bigger the inspiration. We're proud to have been a driving force behind the country's largest low-income solar program to date in Florida, and we're looking to do better in 2020.

"Work as if you live in the early days of a better nation." Alasdair Gray, who passed in 2019, wrote these words, and we find them to be a good north star. We're glad you are on this journey with us.

Onwards,
Adam Browning

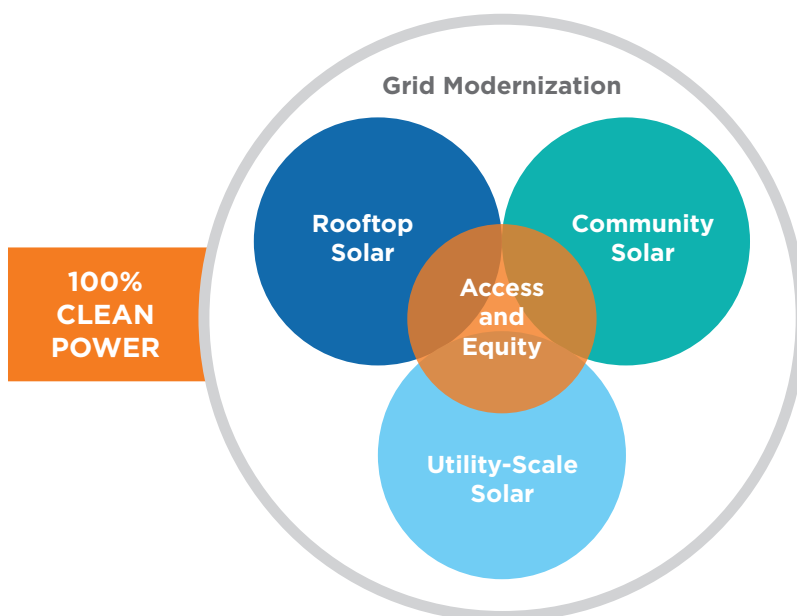
A handwritten signature of Adam Browning in black ink.



VOTE SOLAR

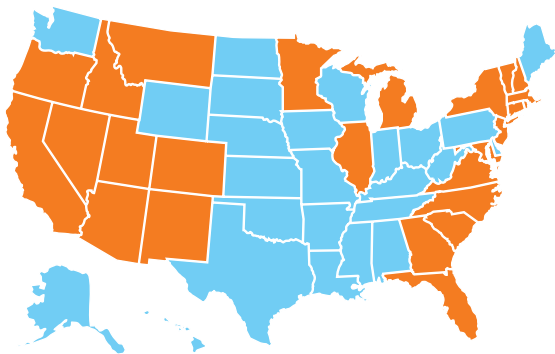
Founded in 2002, Vote Solar has a proven track record of speeding America's transition to local, affordable, equitable clean electricity through effective state-level solar policy advocacy. We drive progress in state legislatures and regulatory commissions through a powerful combination of deep policy expertise, meaningful partnerships, and strategic public engagement. Success means diverse and equitable solar opportunities at the individual, community and utility scales—and a 100% clean powered future that benefits everyone.

Creating Diverse Opportunities for Critical Clean Energy Progress

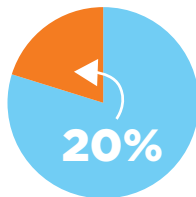


2019 by the Numbers

VOTE SOLAR worked in **28 states**



IMPACTING
over **20%** of the
population of the US
28.5 million households
75 million people



TOTALING

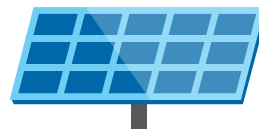


23 Legislative Campaigns



59 Regulatory Engagements

Over **50 GW** of new
solar committed



80%
more solar
in the US

SOLAR RIGHTS PROTECTED for



**174,000
solar customers**
(almost 10% of all solar
customers in the US)



Displace **45 million
tons of coal** per year



Avoid **50 million tons
of CO₂** pollution



Take **10 million cars**
off the road

2.1 GW of low-income solar
serving **437,000 households**
and over **1 million people**

2019 Campaign Highlights

South Carolina Passes Energy Freedom Act

A unanimous solar victory in the South? We helped make it happen. After a disappointing loss last year, our victory in 2019 is even sweeter. We attended and organized countless meetings, rallied constituent phone calls and letters and finally watched the state House unanimously pass the Energy Freedom Act with bipartisan support. The law removes caps on rooftop solar, opens the door for an expanded role for large-scale renewables in the Palmetto State's energy mix, and encourages the conservative value of competition, while fostering local jobs and economic investment. After passing the Senate and receiving the Governor's signature, South Carolina can now expand affordable solar options throughout the state.

Governor Cuomo Signs “World’s Most Ambitious” Climate and Clean Energy Law

New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act is a big deal. It means enough solar to power one million homes by 2025 and powering New York with 100% clean electricity by 2040. It means a future where no child will be forced to breathe toxic pollution from power plants in their neighborhood. It means the creation of 11,000 local solar jobs dedicated to building a more resilient new energy economy. And it means critical investment in New York's low-income and environmental justice communities, so that families that are most impacted by the climate crisis and the harmful burden of our fossil economy have the opportunity to thrive with clean energy. After two years of dogged campaigning, we're excited for New York to lead the east coast on climate and bring its neighbors along for the ride.



▶ **Florida Utility Agrees to Increase Low-Income Access to Shared Solar**

In March, Florida Power and Light announced the biggest voluntary, utility-owned shared solar program in the country early this year. SolarTogether would add 1,500 megawatts of solar in sunny Florida, but the original plan failed to address the unique challenges faced by Florida's disadvantaged communities. We stepped in to ensure that every Florida family that wanted to participate was able to access affordable, local solar energy. As a result of a settlement agreement between Vote Solar, Florida Power and Light and other interested parties, approximately 10,000 low-income households will now be able to participate in the SolarTogether program. That's an estimated \$1,300 in savings per family over the life of the program. Solar is now Florida's most affordable energy resource; we'll continue to ensure that Florida families that can benefit the most from those savings have access to shared and rooftop solar programs.

▶ **Montana Protects Fair Pricing for Rooftop Solar**

When the Montana Public Service Commission unanimously adopted our proposal to protect fair pricing for solar customers, Montana families and small businesses breathed a deep sigh of relief. Not only will current solar homeowners be able to continue earning retail market value for the electricity they provide to the grid, but Montanans who are interested in going solar in the future are now assured the same return on their local solar energy investments. This is a big win in a red state that values energy freedom, local jobs and affordable electricity bills, three key benefits of rooftop solar. Along with our partners at the Montana Renewable Energy Association and Earthjustice, we also successfully defeated an unfair "demand charge" that would add more discriminatory and difficult to control fees for solar customers. We're excited to continue to watch the solar industry grow in Montana and other states in the region.



Vote Solar Pushes States Toward 100% Clean Energy



Today, one in four U.S. residents live in a state with a legal mandate to achieve 100% renewable energy. In 2019, Vote Solar members and advocates supported legislation to get New Mexico, Nevada and New York to 100% renewable energy by 2050, or earlier. And in Maryland, we worked with Republican Governor Larry Hogan to approve a 50% renewable energy goal by 2030, and secure a commitment to

examine pathways to 100% clean energy by 2040. We're also excited to continue to support progress in Illinois, where we're part of a broad coalition keeping up pressure on the General Assembly and the governor to sign a widely popular and comprehensive commitment to 100% renewable energy, clean energy jobs and equitable economic investment.



➤ Investing in Equitable and Inclusive Partnerships

In 2019 Vote Solar's Access and Equity program hosted a series of three workshops in collaboration with Chispa Arizona and Wildfire. The series entitled, ¡Se Fue la Luz!, brought together Phoenix residents, energy advocates, business leaders, and elected officials to discuss our current energy system, its impacts, and how participants could be advocates for the clean energy transition they want to see. The series was offered with Spanish translation to increase the accessibility of content, and garnered city attention creating new opportunities for collaboration in the state. Throughout the year Vote Solar staff continued to work alongside partners in the Solar Equity Initiative to host Energy Justice trainings with the NAACP and trainings in support of United Methodist Women's Just Energy for All campaign in five states. Vote Solar was happy to serve as an on-site resource, presenting content on policy, communications, and organizing tactics as well as working with participants to create action plans for continued clean energy advocacy.

➤ Turning Solar Customers into Solar Advocates

There are more than two million households and businesses nationwide that have gone solar. These are Republicans and Democrats, rural and urban families, and many others who are united in wanting to use homegrown sunshine to lower their energy bills and build a better world for their children and grandchildren—but their voices are often missing from the policymaking process.

Vote Solar teamed up with Solar United Neighbors to change all that by forming a new national partnership dedicated to mobilizing this potentially powerful clean energy constituency. We launched the partnership with an “I ♥ My Solar” postcard campaign that gave solar customers in all 50 states a fun and easy way to send a personalized message to their state and federal elected officials and become part of the nation's clean energy movement.



Our Growing Team

Our team works day in and day out to overcome opposition from entrenched energy interests and speed the transition to clean energy for everyone. In 2019, we continued to grow our staff and invest in our team. In 2020 and beyond, we plan to continue to grow our staff and deepen our impact nationwide.

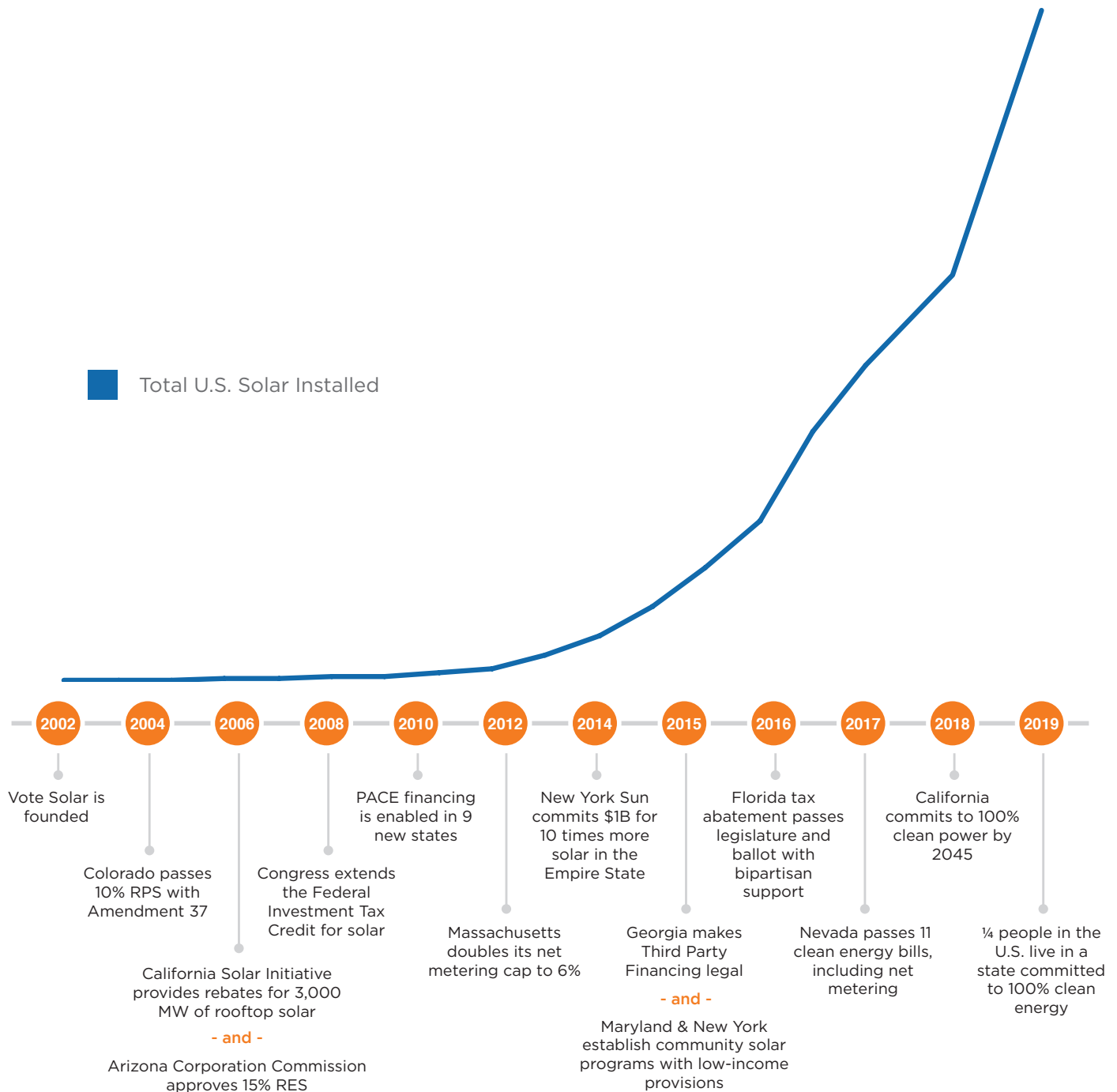
Building a new kind of energy system that values and encourages participation by people of every race, gender and life experience is not only the right thing to do, it's something we must do to achieve the transformational change that a 100% clean energy future requires. In 2019, we focused on deepening our internal commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), building on our first staff-wide inclusion training in 2018. We are committed to continuing to learn and grow as part of the Environment & Equity Leadership Cohort that brings together similar non-profit organizations to share best practices.

As we go forward and build on our successes, we're taking the time and investing the resources to make sure that our advocacy work is more equitable. For us, a starting point involves evaluating more deeply what diversity, equity and inclusion mean for us as an organization, and making sure our work reflects our values.



17 Years of Vote Solar Impact

Since 2002, Vote Solar has been at the forefront of state-level solar policy advocacy, working to protect and expand diverse solar markets. In that time, solar has become one of our nation's lowest cost and fastest growing energy resources.



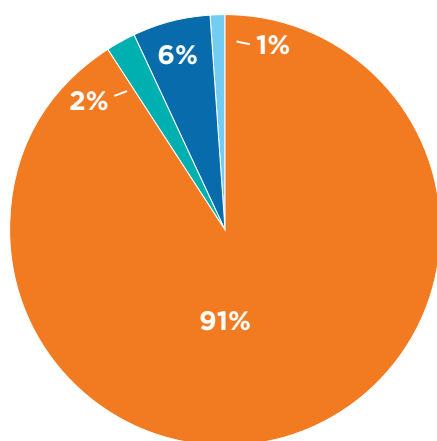
Financials





Vote Solar depends on support from individuals, foundations, and business leaders. Thank you for your generous support over the past year! We truly could not do this work without you.

2019 was a year of strong and steady growth—primarily due to significant new funding from institutional foundations. These new investments enabled expansion of our regional programs in the Midwest and Southwest, and our Access & Equity, Communications, and Development departments. Vote Solar continues to seek new sources of funding as we work to scale to meet the challenges ahead.

Funding increases negated the planned \$350,000 budget deficit and ended the year with a surplus. This surplus will be rolled over to support increased program work in 2020 and to strengthen organizational reserves.

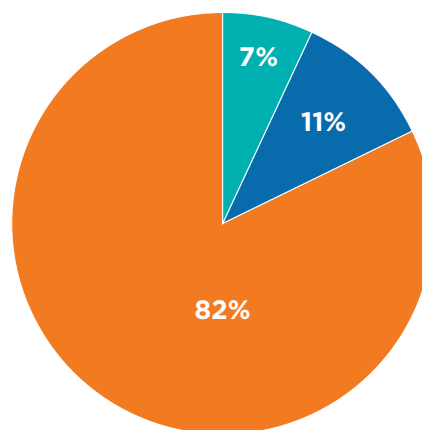
REVENUE






	CONTRIBUTIONS	\$6,626,667
	FUNDRAISING EVENTS	\$179,443
	IN-KIND DONATIONS/SERVICES	\$459,503
	OTHER REVENUE	\$55,961

TOTAL REVENUE \$7,321,573

EXPENSES



	PROGRAM	\$5,320,569
	MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	\$445,220
	FUNDRAISING	\$747,692

TOTAL EXPENDITURE \$6,513,481



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