

July 24, 2018

Senator Harriette Chandler
Senate President
24 Beacon St., Room 332
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Robert DeLeo
Speaker of the House
24 Beacon St., Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Dear President Chandler and Speaker DeLeo,

As municipal leaders from across the Commonwealth, we are writing to urge swift passage of pending clean energy legislation to continue the growth of solar in Massachusetts. Massachusetts' solar success has led to consumer savings, economic growth, job creation and environmental benefits, and cities and towns have been at the forefront of this story as participants and beneficiaries. We work with the solar industry to save money on our electric bills through net metering, lease our land and roofs for solar projects and bring in property taxes from local development. But these benefits are at risk due to an uncertain policy environment that threatens the state's solar industry.

Already, the Commonwealth has lost more than 3,000 solar jobs across the state after two straight years of losses, following many years of double digit growth. Local jobs, taxpayer savings, reduced electric bills and public health benefits are being lost in our communities every day due to this uncertainty. We need the House and Senate to continue their bold clean energy leadership by acting quickly to get this important segment of our economy back on track.

We ask that you act to:

- **Remove the caps on solar net metering or raise them by at least 5%.** Net metering makes sure municipalities, families and businesses get fair, full credit on their energy bills for valuable solar electricity they deliver to the grid for use nearby. It has been a year and a half since the net metering cap for private and community shared projects in National Grid's service territory was hit, slamming the brakes on hundreds of solar projects in more than 170 cities and towns. More of the caps have been hit since. The net metering caps should be removed entirely or must at least be raised by 5% to match the 1,600 megawatt (MW) supported by the new Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program.
- **Repeal Eversource's new solar "Demand Charge."** Massachusetts' largest electric utility, Eversource, won a huge victory against solar earlier this year. The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) approved Eversource's proposal to tax solar customers using a complicated new electric rate structure – called a demand charge. This will make solar less economic and make new solar customers' bills more unpredictable in the future. National Grid, the Commonwealth's other large utility is working on their own charge as we speak that may even change the economics for existing solar customers. Without legislative action to strengthen the statute around a "Minimum Monthly Reliability Charge" this session, the residential solar market in the state will contract, leaving our

residents with fewer options for saving money on their electric bills, and creating an atmosphere of unpredictability for businesses hoping to make long term investments in solar energy and solar jobs

- **Raise the Renewable Portfolio Standard to 3 Percent per Year.** In order to meet our ambitious climate pollution reduction goals and continue to develop a strong clean energy economy, we need to raise our Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to 3% per year. The RPS sends a signal to renewable energy developers, financiers and investors, and workers that the Commonwealth is open for business – and will remain open for business in the years to come.

Municipalities and the General Court have a long and proud history of working closely together to strengthen Massachusetts' economy while making our communities and environment healthier. We appreciate your leadership in supporting Massachusetts three hundred and fifty one cities and towns and we ask that you act on these critical policy needs and keep our Commonwealth on the path to wealthier, healthier and cleaner communities.

Sincerely,

Adam Chapdelaine
Town Manager – Arlington

Douglas M. Lucente
Selectman – Lexington

Robert Scherer
Selectman – Ashland

Gail M. Infurna
Mayor – Melrose

Al Blake
Chair, Energy Committee – Becket

Emily Norton
City Councilor – Newton

Quinton Zondervan
City Councilor – Cambridge

David Narkewicz
Mayor – Northampton

Jon Mitchell
Mayor – New Bedford

Alisa Klein
City Councilor – Northampton

Shelly Dein
Energy and Sustainability Director – Quincy

Stephen Dibble
City Councilor – Salem

Adam Steiner
City Councilor – Framingham

Mark Niedergang
Alderman – Somerville

Cheryl Tully Stoll
City Councilor – Framingham

William G. Keegan, Jr.
Town Manager – Foxborough

Michelle Ciccolo
Vice-Chair, Board of Selectmen – Lexington

Anne O'Connor
Chair, Select Board – Williamstown

Joseph Pato
Selectman – Lexington

John Odell
Energy and Asset Director - Worcester