



VOTE SOLAR 2022 WORKPLAN



Our Vision:

A resilient world, powered by the sun.



Vote Solar's mission is to realize a 100% clean energy future through a solutions-driven, people-first approach.

Vote Solar has been advancing clean energy policy in legislatures and public utility commissions across the United States since 2001. Most of our work is carried out at state level—where the majority of energy decisions are made. Our expertise comes from a deep understanding of regulatory interventions and the legislative process, and how to identify and accelerate solar and clean energy solutions. We are adept at bringing diverse stakeholders together to forge inclusive coalitions and winning campaigns.

Our goal is to effect real, tangible change. And we have the track record to back up our impact: twenty years in, because of our work, one in three people live in a state with a 100% clean energy commitment. Moving forward, we will not only expand that number but ensure that more people can participate in holding utilities and decision-makers accountable for greater equity and justice in our energy system.



Vote Solar Staff, 2021.

FRONT COVER PHOTOS:

Top: Vote Solar staff and partners gather together in Chicago to witness and celebrate the signing of the long-awaited Illinois Clean Energy and Jobs Act.

Bottom Left: Vote Solar staffers Sean Garren, Yarneth Marin, and Rick Gilliam at staff retreat in Arizona.

Bottom Right: Partners and Vote Solar Midwest Senior Regional Director John Delurey (second from right) lobby in Springfield for the passage of the Illinois Clean Energy Jobs Act.

HOW WE'LL WORK IN 2022

CONTINUING NEED: THE STATE-BY-STATE APPROACH

The United States now has a federal government that is openly promoting climate solutions. While comprehensive federal policy is immensely helpful in the fight to prevent the worst impacts of climate change and can offer significant guidance and incentives for energy transformation—implementation, regulation and actual change are still required through state- and utility-level intervention. Even with the best case policy accomplishments at the federal level, for the U.S. to complete an equitable clean energy transition on a timeline that provides a chance to stave off the worst impacts of climate change, continued investment and attention at the state level is mandatory.

WHY SOLAR?

Because it's plentiful, it's popular, and it has a unique ability to shift power—literally and figuratively—from fossil fuel companies and corporate interests to real people, who overwhelmingly support the kind of clean energy progress our climate crisis demands. Shifting to solar means new jobs, a more resilient energy supply, and placing power squarely in the hands of our local communities. By giving people plentiful opportunities to go solar themselves and see the benefits of renewable energy in their own communities, Vote Solar is delivering real, immediate wins for climate action, and building political will for continued progress at all levels of government. Solar is the sharp end of the wedge cracking open the old centralized fossil fuel paradigm and driving progress toward a cleaner and more democratic energy system.

KEY STRATEGIES



REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON POLLUTING GAS



Challenge new gas infrastructure and reduce dependence on existing dirty gas by demonstrating the efficacy of a full suite of alternative clean energy solutions to deliver low cost, reliable energy.



PUSH FOR BOLD, EQUITABLE CLIMATE GOALS



Work to establish an equitable and swift transition to 100% renewable energy as the new baseline in states across the country.



CENTER EQUITY IN CLEAN ENERGY POLICIES



Co-create policy agendas with local partners and deliver local clean energy access and benefits to low-wealth and other marginalized communities.



BUILD THE GRID AND UTILITY OF THE FUTURE

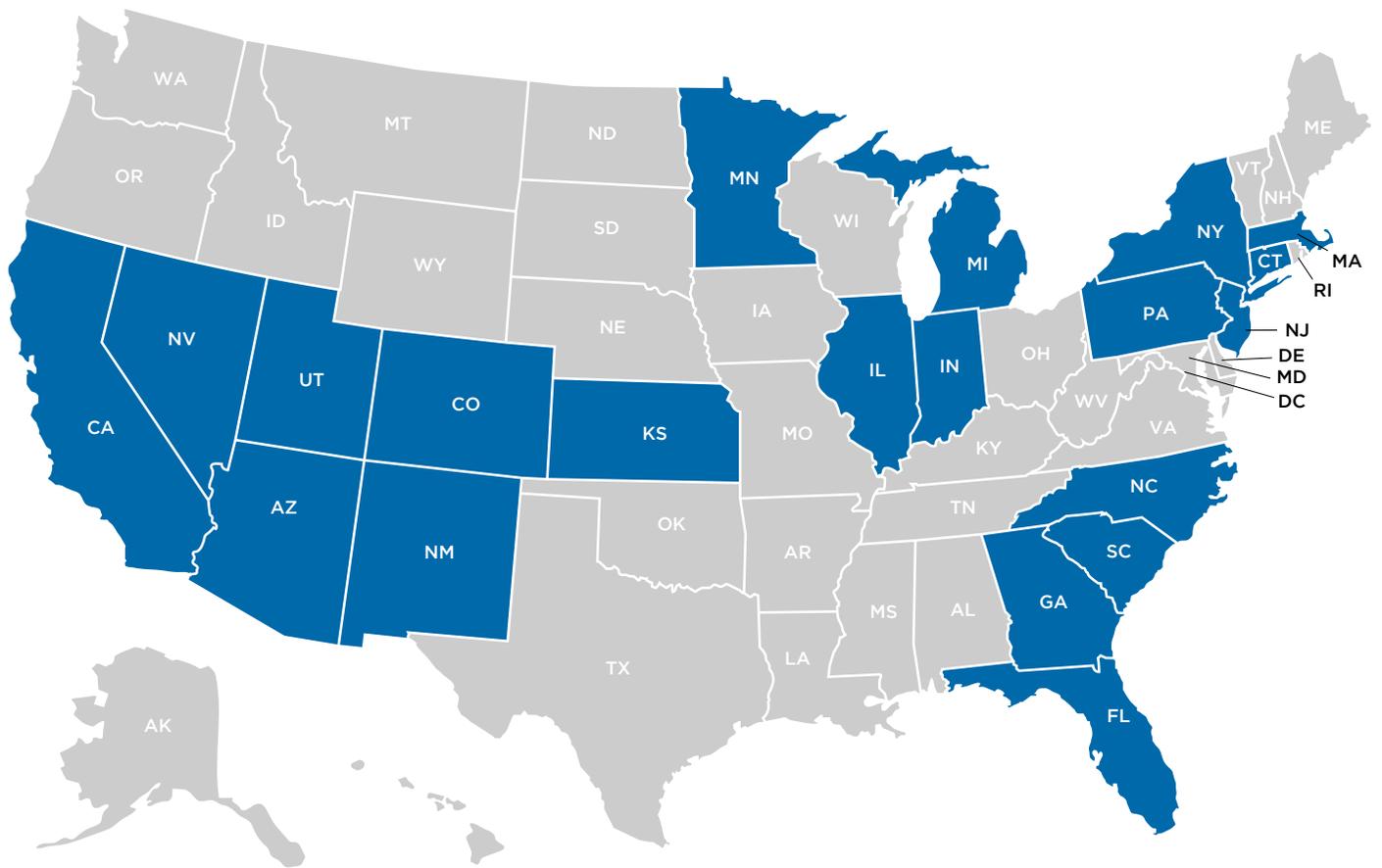


Continue to influence regulatory policy redesign to ensure that utility planning takes full advantage of modern distributed clean energy technologies and focuses on reliability and resiliency.

OUR WORK IN 2022

Accelerating the transition to equitable clean energy in over 20 states

Vote Solar will push back on investments in gas, and move solar and other clean energy solutions forward through policy and regulatory strategies in at least twenty states—delivering immediate carbon-reduction benefits.



Together, working state by state, we will continue to set this country on a path to create a livable planet for generations to come. And as we do this, we'll establish the programs and policies that ensure everyone can participate in and benefit from the transition to renewable energy.

Our communities, our health, and our climate cannot afford anything less.

STATE CAMPAIGNS

WEST & INTERIOR WEST

Nowhere in the country is solar potential more visible than in the West. With a profusion of sunshine, the recent passage of sweeping climate policies, and plans to shutter most of the region's coal plants, the West can be viewed as a climate leader. And with staggering droughts, heat waves, and wildfires now part of everyday life, the urgency of transitioning away from fossil fuels is keenly felt. At the same time, the West is a challenging landscape where utilities have an outsized influence and political realities continue to stymie progress.

Vote Solar is helping to guide the region into the next phase of the energy transition—weaving energy justice into the fabric of clean energy action. Our work will focus on securing distributed generation as an ever greater solution for clean energy integration (thereby ensuring individual choice for customers) and making sure that the transition towards an electrified economy benefits all communities, especially those historically excluded.

ARIZONA

Arizona is on the cusp of making enormous clean energy progress. In 2021, the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) approved a set of rules to advance 100% carbon-free energy standards—a vital step in getting the state to commit to a 100% clean energy system.

In 2022, Vote Solar will work to secure the final passage of the 100% clean energy rules at the ACC and begin engaging in the implementation process. We will also work to strengthen and broaden our coalition of partnerships to generate viable low-wealth and energy justice (including energy burden issues) policy solutions. This includes pushing for expansion of equitable access to electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure as well as community solar; securing strong solar + storage programs for low-wealth

households; and advocating for a Just and Equitable Transition for coal-impacted communities while also deploying solar in those communities. We will work to advance performance incentive mechanisms to drive utility investment and intervene in rates cases to protect and grow rooftop solar with a focus on ensuring equity and fair valuation of solar.



Yaraneth Marin, Vote Solar Interior West Regional Director, at press conference to protest the Salt River Project's proposed gas power plant expansion.

CALIFORNIA

California continues to be one of the nation's leaders in advancing the path to a reliable, 100% carbon-free electricity grid. However, with the realities of massive income and racial inequality as well as annual catastrophic wildfires, droughts that significantly lower the amount of available hydropower, high energy rates, and regular widespread blackouts, the state is at risk of stalling out on its clean energy progress—especially when it comes to leadership on distributed clean energy.

In 2022, Vote Solar will improve how the state plans for, incentivizes and integrates high amounts of distributed generation into the grid, and how it ensures community resilience. We will work towards these goals through the development of microgrids and incentivizing local solar + storage. We will continue to push for a net metering policy that keeps rooftop solar growing and increases solar access to low-wealth customers. We will support efforts to accelerate the state's clean energy mandate. Vote Solar also plans to develop an Equitable Clean Distributed Generation Policy Roadmap working in deep partnership with environmental justice allies. This policy tool will guide our work in the years to come.



Vote Solar Director of Talent & Culture, Irina Cortez, and Managing Director of Operations, Elizabeth Brooks, celebrate at Vote Solar's 20th Anniversary party in San Francisco.

COLORADO

In 2022, Vote Solar will continue working in close collaboration with frontline groups, prioritizing community engagement in the regulatory process to bring about real outcomes with real benefits. These include reducing energy burdens, mitigating pollution, increasing resiliency in underserved communities by expanding the deployment of, and funding for, distributed energy resources (both rooftop and community solar), and blocking any new proposals for gas buildouts in disadvantaged communities. Specifically, this will include intervening in Xcel's Renewable Energy Standard Plan, continuing our intervention in the Public Service Company resource plan, and continuing to advocate for rate designs that support the growth of rooftop solar—with a particular focus on equity.

NEVADA

Over the past year, Nevada made significant progress towards its transition to 100% clean energy with the passage of the sweeping Clean Energy Economy Act (CEEA). This bill includes a \$100 million EV infrastructure plan—with 51% of funding directly benefiting historically underserved communities, a massive transmission upgrade project, a tenant solar program for multi-family apartment buildings, an energy storage tax abatement program, and the requirement to join a regional transmission organization that will enable the state to accrue economic benefits by being part of a competitive wholesale market with other western states. In 2022, Vote Solar will focus on regulatory implementation of the transportation electrification plan in the CEEA, making certain that environmental justice allies have a voice in both the regulatory process and the design of programs, incentives, and desired outcomes associated with the state's significant financial investment in underserved communities.

NEW MEXICO

After three years of building robust partnerships and hard on-the-ground work, 2021 delivered a massive win in New Mexico with the passage of the Community Solar Act—a vital pathway to expand solar access to low-wealth communities and ensure Tribal and Pueblo energy sovereignty. In 2022, we will help finalize the community solar rulemaking process and support partners in their implementation work, including establishing favorable rules for low-wealth and Indigenous communities for project approval, solar bill credit, and subscriber qualification. We also plan to collaborate with partners to identify and obtain vital disconnection protections for customers burdened with pandemic-induced utility debt and create a statewide plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



Mayane Barudin, Regional Director and Tribal Liaison, discusses New Mexico State Bill 84 on local television news.

UTAH

The market for rooftop solar is dismal in Utah; the lack of stability and predictability in solar valuation has been a significant deterrent for solar adoption. Over the last two years, Vote Solar has focused on securing fair value for distributed generation. In 2022, we will continue our engagement at the Utah Supreme Court, appealing against the Commission's decision to rubber stamp Rocky Mountain Power's distorted value of solar calculations. Our goal is to advocate for a fair value for Utah residents, provide certainty for that rate moving forward, and as a result, introduce market stability to spur the growth of rooftop solar in the state. We will complement this regulatory strategy with a legislative one by supporting a net metering policy that would effectively revive Utah's rooftop solar market and provide clarity for the value of rooftop solar moving forward.

MIDWEST

The Midwest presents a unique opportunity to demonstrate that, if executed with intention, a transition to clean energy can be a boon for jobs and communities previously excluded from the benefits of renewables. Vote Solar is working in the region to push back on new gas proposals, accelerate the shuttering of existing coal plants, level the playing field for solar and clean energy, and ensure that the benefits of the energy transformation are equitable. In 2022, we will continue to make significant impacts by providing policy expertise, carrying out regulatory interventions and acting as a bridge between industry and advocacy groups.

ILLINOIS

With the 2021 passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), Illinois solidified its status as a leader in the equitable transition to 100% clean energy. In 2022, Vote Solar's work will center on ensuring that these hard fought wins are fully implemented and serve as a model for the rest of the region and across the country. As we move into a regulatory space that has been historically unwelcoming to under-resourced communities and their advocates, Vote Solar will work to make the implementation process more democratic and participatory.

In coordination with our coalition partners, specific issues Vote Solar will promote in 2022 include incorporating the Clean Energy Jobs and Justice Fund, a non-profit 'green bank' written into CEJA, to make sure low cost capital is available to BIPOC contractors and low-wealth customers; supporting the implementation of the Equity Accountability System, to incentivize equitable hiring and contracting among renewable energy companies; and, ensuring implementation of CEJA's equitable workforce and contractor development provisions at the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

(DCEO). As part of the implementation process, we will work to develop performance metrics and incentives, integrated grid planning processes, and multi-year rate plans. We will also work to reform the state's Solar for All program to ensure full participation, develop a study of the disparities of rooftop solar in the state, and complete an overhaul of the interconnection standards to accommodate the next generation of distributed energy resources, including customer-owned battery storage.



Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signs the state's Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA) into law.

INDIANA

Indiana is a proving ground for what's possible when solar and clean energy can outcompete coal and gas on economic terms. Vote Solar waded into coal-heavy Indiana for the first time in 2020 and began to build the case that a portfolio of local, clean energy resources can displace the need for more dirty gas. In 2022, we will continue to shine a spotlight on entrenched utility interests and ensure they are making the best decisions for their ratepayers. We will work to prevent the buildout of proposed new gas through intervention in Duke Energy's Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) process, and push for changes in demand response programs and monthly netting for solar energy compensation to promote increased participation in energy efficiency and local solar programs.

KANSAS

Over the last two years, Vote Solar has worked to bolster the state's fledgling rooftop solar market. In the coming year, we will continue the push to open up Kansas' rooftop solar market by challenging the state's practice of not allowing third-party ownership of rooftop solar installations. We will also work to ensure that local clean energy resources are properly valued and fully deployed by challenging rate design structures and interventions at the Kansas Corporation Commission.

MICHIGAN

Our work in 2022 will focus on building on past regulatory success and expanding access to rooftop solar, while also growing grassroots power to demonstrate broad

interest in clean energy progress and enable future policy success. Specifically, we will continue our fight to eliminate the cap on distributed generation and expand access to solar through community solar. We'll do this by building a robust campaign to encourage awareness and public engagement and highlighting the disadvantages of this policy—the most restrictive in the country. We will intervene in DTE Energy's IRP process to accelerate the retirement of coal plants, and bolster our partners' work to build towards the passage of stronger climate justice policies in future years. We will also serve as the non-profit representative on the Low-Income Community Solar Council and advocate against new gas infrastructure in the final phase of the Consumers Energy IRP.

MINNESOTA

Minnesota is an exciting state in the middle of clean energy transformation. We recently expanded our staffing capacity in the state and we are excited to expand our impact in the coming year. In 2022, we'll intervene in utility IRP processes to prove the value of distributed grid resources and push for equity as a core element of planning, support partners' work to push for an end to gas, and strengthen and expand coalition infrastructure to build momentum for the eventual passage of an equitable 100% clean energy commitment. We will also support various efforts for interconnection reform with the goal of expanding capacity for and lowering the cost of connecting solar to the electric grid, and spearhead an effort to establish metrics for Xcel Energy on how to measure, report, and incorporate equity into distribution system planning and investment.

NORTHEAST & MID-ATLANTIC

The Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region is a bastion of clean energy leadership. States like New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Virginia have passed bold climate goals in recent years; utilities and utility commissions have an appetite for creative and ambitious solutions; and vital advocacy is being done by communities working for state level progress. The key challenges in the region continue to be a high reliance on natural gas and, even in states with more mature rooftop solar markets, ensuring that the opportunities and benefits brought on by renewables are equitable and accessible to everyone.

In states with robust clean energy commitments, our focus is to strengthen social justice in energy policy—making sure programs are implemented which provide real, long-term benefits that flow outward to the communities that have been previously omitted. We are also pushing forward groundbreaking concepts around reforming the utility business model and building a favorable narrative for distributed energy resources while dispelling the myths about the need for gas to maintain a reliable grid.

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut has some of the highest electric rates in the continental United States, partially driven by dependence on imported sources of energy, like fracked gas. The state is reconsidering its electric utility system and business model from top to bottom and recent legislation has initiated a process to establish performance-based regulation (PBR) to realign utility incentives around good performance and state goals. In 2022, we will work to reduce the energy burden of underserved communities, ensure reliable access to energy for the most vulnerable, and empower customers to use local clean energy resources (such as solar, energy efficiency and energy storage) to reduce their electric bills and aid the state on its path to a cleaner economy.

MASSACHUSETTS

Following our success in getting the groundbreaking Next Generation Climate Roadmap Bill signed into law, Vote Solar's focus in 2022 will be to ensure the implementation of its critical provisions. We will drive change by demonstrating how solar can stimulate the economy while contributing to the Commonwealth's climate pollution reduction commitments and ensure there is a diverse array of groups at the table to ensure programs are implemented in a way that is comprehensive, precise and includes built-in equity provisions.

We will also collaborate with the frontline, community-led Massachusetts Renews Alliance to build support for the Building Jobs with Justice Act, which aims to create

thousands of jobs by retrofitting a million homes for energy efficiency across the state. We will advocate for the passage of key legislation to move Massachusetts to 100% renewable and equitable electric power, including the 100 Percent Renewable Energy Act and the Solar Power in Environmental Justice and Urban Communities Act. And we will work to finalize an expansion and improvements to the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) to ensure low-wealth customers can participate in local solar.

NEW JERSEY

Despite its high penetration of rooftop solar, New Jersey continues to lag in terms of having an enforceable timeline for statewide decarbonization goals. In 2022, we will focus

on building out a robust and engaged coalition that aims to ensure the benefits of the clean energy transition flow to all New Jerseyans. This includes continuing to push to get the Clean Energy Equity Act (CEEA) across the finish line. In 2022, alongside our New Jersey Shines coalition, we are looking for innovative ways to build grassroots power and deepen labor participation in the clean energy economy. We will also be supporting local organizations in opposing the building or expansion of polluting facilities and gas plants, leading the discussion on the advantages of distributed generation, working to expand the reach of the state's community solar program, and promoting equity considerations in the grid modernization working group discussions at the NJ Board of Public Utilities.



Vote Solar's Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Elena Weissmann joined frontline partners in Newark to march for clean air and urge the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission to reject new fracked gas.

NEW YORK

With the passage of the 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), which includes an unprecedented goal to direct 40% of the 'benefits' to low-wealth households and other underserved communities, New York has solidified itself as a clean energy leader. Our work in the state continues to focus on the implementation of the 100% clean energy commitment to make sure that this policy delivers on its promise and can serve as a model for other states. In 2022, we will resume our work in close partnership with New York Renews, a broad coalition of 300+ members, to pass a carbon fee as part of the Climate and Community Investment Act (CCIA). This innovative proposed fee would be levied on the sale of fossil fuels and redistributed among residents—and we'll be pushing for it to create real wealth building and pollution reduction opportunities in disadvantaged communities. We will also build support to codify a goal of 10-12 gigawatts of community solar by 2030, with specific provisions for siting them in underserved communities. In addition, we will intervene at the Public Service Commission to update the Value of Distributed Energy Resources to ensure the continued growth of distributed solar.

PENNSYLVANIA

With a substantially dirty energy mix, local extractive industries, and the recently announced joining of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Pennsylvania is one of the country's most important and exciting frontiers for clean energy development. Vote Solar entered the state for the first time in 2021, laying the groundwork to establish a solid presence while being respectful of local partners and existing coalitions. In 2022, we will continue to focus on building a broad and diverse network of allies to determine the best path forward for clean energy advancement. We'll work to ensure that proceeds from RGGI are reinvested in energy and environmental justice communities. Working in partnership with an array of local groups, we'll generate attention around the potential for community solar to deliver economic benefits, especially in rural areas. We'll also work to establish an office and advisory board in the state that focuses on environmental justice and develop a permit denial process to protect environmental justice communities.

SOUTHEAST

The Southeast presents a broad spectrum when it comes to clean energy progress; Vote Solar must swing between playing barebones defense in some states and supporting exciting innovation in others. On the one end is Florida, where utilities are going after the very foundational policies supporting rooftop solar (i.e. net metering), and on the other, North Carolina, now the first state in the region with a mandated Carbon Plan. Across the Southeast, the energy landscape is dominated by massive utilities which maintain deep ties within the legislative and regulatory spaces.

In 2022, Vote Solar will build the case that clean energy is an invaluable vehicle for revitalizing the region's economic growth—by bringing in new jobs and big investments, and demonstrating that solar can ensure both energy choice for the consumer as well as energy reliability and climate resilience in a region defined by its coastal (and hurricane- and flood-prone) landscapes.

FLORIDA

Florida's energy landscape is characterized by heavy reliance on gas, utility scale solar deployment, and utilities that are only gradually recognizing the cost-effectiveness of solar. But while utilities have grown keener to establish large scale solar that operates

under their own control, they are not averse to attacking rooftop solar to limit the choices for the consumer. In 2022, we will rally to defend against Florida Power and Light's (FPL) assault on net metering. We will also work with the utility in implementing the pilot program for resilient schools from last year's



Nearly 70 solar advocates assembled at the Orlando Utilities Commission meeting to support solar net metering in Florida.

settlement—to deploy solar storage and electric bus batteries to power emergency shelters at schools in communities vulnerable to climate-related outages. And we'll push for increased investment in low-wealth energy efficiency programs and work to shape performance incentives that encourage the expansion of low-wealth programs through the amendment of the Florida Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act (FEECA).

GEORGIA

With the state's political winds shifting, a new day may be dawning in Georgia for the advancement of solar and clean energy. In 2022, we will work to expand both community and rooftop solar and engage in the GA Power rate case to advance rate design that will grow distributed generation and create more access for low-wealth communities. Working alongside a broad coalition of groups, we will build awareness around legislative efforts to create jobs and enhance economic development by taking a percentage of a utility's excess earnings (estimated at about \$20 million a year in Georgia) and putting it into low-wealth energy efficiency, weatherization, and solar programs.

NORTH CAROLINA

The most advanced clean energy state in the region, North Carolina has been fortunate to have an inquisitive and data-driven utilities commission and a pro-climate governor, and the state is ripe for deep energy transformation. In October 2021, the governor signed an energy bill codifying carbon reduction goals into law, including

making it one of the first states in the country requiring a utility Carbon Plan. Our 2022 work will focus on ensuring that the Carbon Plan engenders meaningful change for North Carolinians. We will work to raise awareness of the carbon planning process and educate, encourage and enable a variety of stakeholders and frontline groups to get involved, and to demonstrate the link between mitigation measures now and lower climate adaptation costs in the future. In the next year, we will also collaborate with Duke energy on developing pilot programs that help enable more consumer choice and engagement with grid planning and continue our regulatory intervention in the net metering settlement that covers both Carolinas.

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina made a notable clean energy commitment with the 2019 Energy Freedom Act, laying the pathway to advancing clean energy in the state. In 2022, Vote Solar will focus on participating in energy justice drives with frontline allies and building power through robust, local partnerships. This will include working with the Energy Justice Coalition to generate viable low-wealth policy solutions and building interstate coalitions in the Carolinas that will advocate for a carbon planning process.

OUR COMMITMENT TO ACCESS & EQUITY:

ENERGY FOR ALL

As Vote Solar works to make the United States' energy system 100% clean, we must also work to make it just and equitable. Simply decarbonizing our energy system will replicate the current structures of power and control. We seek to identify and address previous inequities and rebuild in a way that benefits those left out of the energy decision-making process. These same communities, specifically BIPOC communities, have historically borne the brunt of our polluting energy system and have yet to benefit from the clean energy transformation.

Vote Solar works to develop authentic, respectful partnerships to ensure that the people most impacted by energy decisions have a voice in shaping them. We firmly believe that we are stronger when we work together. Every year, we work with hundreds of partners from diverse constituencies across the nation, including national, regional, state and local community groups. We aspire to grow as an organization in our ability to not only challenge injustice and advance just energy for all, but also contribute meaningfully to the broad movement working to dismantle systems of oppression and build a regenerative future.



Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker (center right, with plaque), partners and Vote Solar staff gather to celebrate at the Illinois Environmental Council Gala.

BACK COVER PHOTO:

Keerthana and Amritha from the Arizona Youth Climate Coalition at a Vote Solar event.



VOTE SOLAR



VOTE SOLAR

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