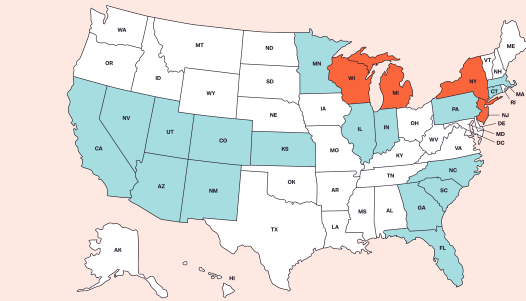


Q4 2022: Impact Report

Powering Clean Energy Progress Across the U.S.



VOTE SOLAR



 **Vote Solar States**  **States Highlighted in This Report**

National Overview



**11 Legislative
Campaigns
Across 4 States**



**56 Regulatory
Proceedings
Across 14 States**



**58 Filings & Expert
Testimonies
Submitted**



**11 Workshops and
Webinars with
869 Participants**

① Michigan

In Michigan, our intervention in rate cases for both Detroit Energy (DTE) and Consumers Energy resulted in critical victories that will advance equitable distribution, reliability and environmental justice for ratepayers. In the final ruling for the DTE case, the Commission slashed the utility's requested rate increase by a whopping \$357.5 million, rejected a punitive solar customer-only fee, and also committed to holding the utility accountable to its existing environmental justice commitments. The Commission also approved several pilot programs that will make electric vehicles more accessible to low-income customers, and assist transit agencies in deploying electric buses, which includes an innovative "pay as you save" procurement model for electric transit buses—a first for utilities nationwide. In a settlement reached with Vote Solar and our partners, Consumers Energy, which serves over 6 million customers across the state, committed to doubling the distributed generation limit from 2% to 4% (easing one of the most restrictive caps in the country), increase the rates paid to distributed generation customers who provide energy to the grid, incorporate equity into its distribution grid planning, improve its stakeholder outreach processes, and initiate inclusive electric vehicle programs.

② New Jersey

In New Jersey, we worked with allies to develop a legislative solution that would expand community solar access for low- and moderate-wealth customers. Community solar is a key pathway towards equitable access, and we are working to remove barriers that low- and moderate-wealth ratepayers face. For instance, to qualify for low-wealth community solar, New Jerseyans have to go through an onerous process to 'prove' their income. This policy will allow people to self-attest their income, dismantling a time-consuming and humiliating process that is, effectively, gatekeeping access to clean energy. Legislation to amend this program passed unanimously out of the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee, and we will continue to fight alongside our allies to make sure it becomes law.

③ New York

In New York, our hard work over the last three years serving on the Climate Action Council's Power Generation Advisory Panel paid off. The Council released the final Climate Scoping Plan, the comprehensive strategic roadmap that will lead the Empire State to net-zero emissions (with a target of 70% clean energy by 2030). In December 2021, the Council released the draft version of the plan inviting public comment. Alongside our allies, we helped New Yorkers advocate for the most robust plan possible which helped shape a final plan that includes distributed energy resources as a social justice tool. As the Plan moves to the

legislature and the governor's office for full implementation, we will continue to advance distributed solar growth, building electrification, and the public accountability needed to fully realize the state's potential as a national climate leader.

④ Wisconsin

We successfully filed a petition at the Commission to allow third-party ownership for renewable energy generation in Wisconsin—one of the few Midwestern states that doesn't allow this—so that ratepayers have the right to lease or rent solar panels from solar contractors. Third-party ownership creates more opportunities for low-wealth households and non-profit facilities to access clean energy. The utilities aggressively, but unsuccessfully, fired back. This win, while limited in scope (directly pertaining to the specific solar company and its customer mentioned in our petition), has much broader implications with regard to how state laws governing distributed energy resources are interpreted and applied.

A&E Callout: Expanding Access to the Regulatory Space

Utility commissions are complex, opaque, and hard to navigate realms that operate through protracted and voluminous planning and deliberation processes. Yet these are the institutions which decide where we get our electricity from as well as how much we pay. Vote Solar is using our expertise in the regulatory space to bring in voices that have long been excluded in regulatory processes. Over the past year, we have dedicated capacity and resources to opening up the regulatory space to organizations (and individual ratepayers) who had not previously engaged due to lack of know-how or resources, and then working with those new actors to deliver incredibly powerful results. Embedded in our approach is the awareness that who gets the chance to participate in these dockets is critical and can impact outcomes. We are creating text and video content that demystify these proceedings (through our Regulatory Advocacy Hub) as well as training sessions and webinars; and they are being used. In North Carolina, the Red Tailed Hawk Collective became a formal intervenor in the Carbon Plan proceeding—the first indigenous led group in the region to do so. In Nevada, we worked with the community organization, the Faith Organizing Alliance, to craft testimony in the Transportation Electrification Plan proceeding. In Minnesota, we ensured that alongside traditional regulatory experts, community advocates submitted testimony during the Xcel Rate Case. And in Connecticut, we continue to work to bring in non-traditional parties in the ongoing conversation about performance based regulation. We are eager to use our expertise to increase public engagement in these exclusionary processes—a critical step towards attaining procedural justice.