



VOTE SOLAR

Strategic Plan

2025-2030

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Executive Summary

Vote Solar has led the way for rapid and equitable solar deployment in the US for nearly 25 years. Guided by the vision of a resilient world powered by the sun, we remain dedicated to achieving our mission of realizing a 100% clean energy future through a solutions-driven, people-first approach.

The threat of climate change impacts us all, but is especially harmful to low- and moderate-wealth communities and communities of color who disproportionately suffer from the adverse health impacts of fossil fuel combustion, the threat of power cut-offs, and the high cost of energy. To stave off the worst impacts of climate change and build an energy future that serves us all we must rapidly transform the US power sector and center solar as a solution.

Solar is the fastest growing energy source in the world and is uniquely suited to offer equitable solutions to combat climate change. Local solar can give communities more agency in their energy future and advance priorities like housing and job creation. To meet US climate goals, it is critical that we accelerate the pace and scale of solar implementation in the next five years. That's where Vote Solar comes in.



Over the next five years, we will further Vote Solar's mission by focusing on the following four goals:

Goal 1: Accelerate the deployment of local solar solutions

Goal 3: Increase the power of frontline communities to win holistic, equitable outcomes and contribute to a durable, transformative movement for a clean energy system

Goal 2: Transform the energy system to center local solar solutions and replace fossil fuel combustion

Goal 4: Build awareness and support for an equitable transition to clean energy, activating communities and key stakeholders

We will know we have been successful over the next 3-5 years if:

- ➔ Customers, decision-makers, and energy system utilities and operators are prioritizing local solar and other clean energy resources over fossil fuels, leading to deployment of local solar solutions up to five times faster than our current pace.
- ➔ State-level energy policies, regulations, and programs are accountable to the communities and people they serve, particularly those facing the first and worst impacts of climate change.
- ➔ A broad and durable coalition of clean energy champions – from decision-makers to advocates – is centering equity and justice in decision-making to ensure clean energy delivers sustainable benefits to all people.

This strategic plan builds on our strengths and successes over the past two decades and sets the foundation for the next phase of Vote Solar's work. We are committed to maximizing our impact by measuring progress and holding ourselves accountable, deepening our expertise and capacity, and nimbly learning and adapting our strategy to fit the moment.

Letter from the Executive Director

Vote Solar's founding theory of change – that building state-level markets for solar would drive scale and reduce costs – has proven true. In 2023, solar accounted for 53 percent of all new electricity generation in the US, passing the 50 percent mark for the first, but surely not the last, time.¹ Batteries are dropping in price and expanding in capabilities, allowing the delivery of solar energy when and where it's needed. The transition away from dirty fossil fuels to a clean, affordable, resilient, and reliable energy system is underway, but it is not happening fast enough.

For nearly 25 years, Vote Solar has been working at the state level – particularly at public utility commissions (PUCs) where most decisions about energy are made – to make that clean energy transition possible. Today, with unprecedented investment and support from the Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other federal legislation, those decisions are even more important. And the results are clear – last year alone we secured solar policy and regulatory victories that will avoid 40.5 million tons of carbon dioxide, equivalent to taking nearly nine million cars off the road for a year. This is real, tangible change and a foundation for accelerated progress. This Five-Year Strategic Plan builds on that foundation by focusing on the most impactful opportunities for Vote Solar.

Of course, we can't do this alone and our strategic plan encompasses only one small slice of the movement we need. There are many other avenues for change. We know monopoly utilities and their fossil allies are seeing this transition and are ever more desperately resisting it. Building the broadest, most diverse coalition and constituency for clean energy is at the core of our approach. This will support the broad movement to a cleaner, resilient, affordable and abundant energy system as part of a more equitable and sustainable economy. This Five-Year Strategic Plan describes our role in this movement. We hope you will join us in this ambitious but critical undertaking – now let's get to work!

Sach



¹ Michelle Davis, et al., US Solar Market Insight, Wood Mackenzie and Solar Energy Industries Association (September 9, 2024). Available at: <https://seia.org/research-resources/solar-market-insight-report-q3-2024/>

Introduction

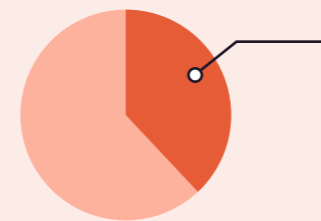
We stand at a crossroads. We have the technology to affordably solve the climate crisis, but in the US we lack the political will and bold policy leadership to transition fast enough. Even with the enormous and unprecedented investments flowing from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and other federal legislation, utilities are collectively resistant to fulfilling the country's climate obligations.² The US is the second biggest emitter in the world. Given that 25% of US emissions come from our power sector, the slow pace of change is unacceptable and focusing on the US electricity system is critical for meeting global targets.³ With rapidly growing demand for the first time in a decade, now is the time to accelerate proven clean energy solutions to safeguard the climate and serve communities with reliable, resilient, and affordable energy.

Unfortunately, the transition to a carbon free, sustainable, modernized and reliable energy grid is daunting to entrenched fossil-based interests and systems. Utility investments and energy portfolio decisions exacerbate the problem, often serving corporate and shareholder's short-term interests rather than energy customers or societal needs. Without opposition, they will continue to expand gas portfolios, and even hang on to completely uneconomic coal,⁴ despite the fact that new clean energy projects are the least expensive energy resource available. They are even cost competitive or cheaper than operating nearly all existing coal plants and many gas plants in the US.⁵

We also know that climate change is increasingly affecting everyone through extreme weather events like hurricanes and heat waves, and related infrastructure

failures, including widespread blackouts. However, it's well-documented that frontline communities—particularly low-wealth rural and remote areas, as well as Black, Indigenous, and people of color—often bear the first and worst impacts of extreme weather events. In addition, these same communities already face higher utility bills and exposure to pollution from an energy system structurally designed to cause disproportionate harm.

Thankfully, modern solar technologies offer an unmatched opportunity to address all of these challenges. As the fastest growing, cheapest, and most flexible energy resource in the world, it can do it quickly. Solar is popular and mobilizes people for positive change. Local solar solutions in particular, deliver tangible economic and public health benefits, especially for communities harmed by fossil pollution, threatened by power cut-offs, and impoverished by the high cost of energy. We must continue to pressure the hundreds of regulatory and policy-making bodies that govern the utilities, as well as the utilities themselves, to make this transition quickly and as affordably as possible.



Thirty-eight percent of the country is struggling with a high or severe energy burden—paying an unsustainable portion of their income to meet basic energy needs.⁶

² Cara Fogler and Noah Ver Beek, The Dirty Truth About Utility Climate Pledges, Sierra Club (2023). Available at: https://coal.sierraclub.org/sites/nat-coal/files/dirty_truth_report_2023.pdf?utm_source=sierraclub&utm_medium=web&utm_id=dirty-truth&utm_content=popup

³ US EPA <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

⁴ Fogler, The Dirty Truth About Utility Climate Pledges.

⁵ Levelized Cost of Energy+, Lazard (2024). Available at <https://www.lazard.com/media/xemfey0k/lazards-lcoeplus-june-2024-vf.pdf>

⁶ Sydney P. Forrester, Cristina Crespo Montañés, Eric O'Shaughnessy, and Galen Barbose, Modeling the potential effects of rooftop solar on household energy burden in the United States, Nature Communications, 15:4676 (2024). Available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-024-48967-x>

The Challenge

We already face an affordability crisis. Families and communities who have disproportionately suffered the negative consequences of extracting and burning dirty fossil fuels are also being most burdened to pay for that energy. Across the country, a staggering 38% of the population faces a high or severe energy burden, which means they are spending too much of their income for essential services.⁷ However, local solar solutions can reduce household energy burden. A new study from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory showed that solar reduced energy burden for an overwhelming majority of solar customers and had the most significant impact on low- and moderate-wealth families.⁸

Our aging energy grid is also vulnerable and unreliable in the face of extreme weather conditions. We are witnessing increasingly frequent and extreme weather patterns, including more intense storms, extreme flooding, and prolonged droughts and forest fire seasons. In 2022, an unprecedented heat wave severely strained the California grid, threatening to trigger rolling blackouts. But the state's 80,000 customer-sited solar-charged batteries produced an estimated 340 MW during critical peak hours, helping keep the lights on and the grid functioning continuously.⁹ Isolated rural communities vulnerable to power outages operate their local solar resources smoothly and effectively when connected to the grid, like Blue Lake Rancheria's solar microgrid on Indigenous land in California. But during grid outages, they can operate independently to provide emergency services to their community.¹⁰ Improved communication and control technology allows large numbers of these customer-sited resources to operate in coordination like a virtual power plant (VPP). These kinds of resilience and reliability services, and the grid flexibility that comes along with it, provide real value to our energy system.¹¹



⁷ id.

⁸ id.

⁹ Distributed Sun-Charged Batteries Helped Grid During California Heat Wave, Again, CALSSA press release (September 8, 2022). Available at: <https://calssa.org/press-releases/2022/9/8/distributed-sun-charged-batteries-helped-grid-during-california-heat-wave-again>

¹⁰ Karen Petersen, Blue Lake Rancheria's Foresight and Planning Yield "Just-in-Time" Resilience Benefits as Climate Crisis Intensifies, US DOE Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (October 8, 2021). Available at: <https://www.energy.gov/indianenergy/articles/tribal-microgrids-support-tenuous-lifelines-during-grid-shutdowns&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1727991576786848&usg=AOvVaw21mvpQiQoVgLP1nbPurOLR>

¹¹ Ryan Hledik and Kate Peters, Real Reliability: The Value of Virtual Power, Brattle Group (May 2023). Available at: https://www.brattle.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Real-Reliability-The-Value-of-Virtual-Power_5.3.2023.pdf

The Opportunity



Why Local Solar

There is no doubt about it – we need a lot more solar and we need it quickly. Vote Solar envisions a 100% clean energy future with solar providing at least half of total generation. Yet by 2023, less than six percent of our electricity was generated by solar, so there is much more work to do.¹² Analysts estimate that we have to triple renewable capacity by 2030 to stay on track to meet climate goals.¹³

At the same time, growing electricity demand from expansion of server infrastructure for artificial intelligence and the electrification of transportation and buildings is increasingly straining our energy system now, driving up our peak energy demand by at least 60 gigawatts (GW) in just the next five years. Utilities use this to justify continued investment in new and existing gas plants despite solar being far more abundant and affordable in the long term.

It is true that solar is competitive and the market reflects that. In 2024, 58% of planned capacity additions in the US – 36.4 GW – are solar.¹⁴ Even so, the full potential of utility scale solar and the necessary transmission upgrades can take decades to permit and build. Building local solar solutions quickly and generating power where it is needed could meet the near term growth in electricity demand, buying time and flexibility for larger resources to come online.

Solar on rooftops and in communities is catalytic and can accelerate clean energy deployment to match the urgency of our climate crisis. As of June 2024, after 25 years of growth, there are slightly more than 50 GW of local solar deployed in the United States.¹⁵ Our own analysis suggests that we need to accelerate the deployment of local solar solutions to reach at least 184 GW by 2035, and 250 GW by 2040. Local solar can be rapidly deployed on existing buildings and connected to existing distribution infrastructure, giving us more options to ramp up large scale energy and transmission capacity over time. Rooftop and local solar installations, particularly when paired with batteries to operate as a virtual power plant (VPP), could save ratepayers up to \$35 billion on energy costs just in the next 10 years.¹⁶ In fact, the most affordable 100% clean energy future maximizes local solar solutions, saving \$473 billion over the status quo.¹⁷



Local solar offers a new pathway to shift economic and power structures and reimagine a clean energy future that puts people first. Rooftop and local solar also spread the economic, environmental, and energy benefits of this transition more equitably across communities. These solutions demonstrate the tangible benefits of renewable energy, especially for communities harmed by fossil pollution, threatened by power cut-offs, and impoverished by the high cost of energy. DOE estimates that there is 1 TeraWatt (TW) of potential solar generation on rooftops across the country,¹⁸ and low- to moderate-income households alone represent 273 GW.¹⁹ Putting solar in peoples' hands both builds a larger constituency and opens a massive opportunity for deployment.

¹² Solar Generation as a Percentage of Total Generation, Solar Industry Update, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, (Accessed 10/9/2024). Available at: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/jarett.zuboy/viz/SolarGenerationasaPercentageofTotalGeneration/SolarPercentbyYear>

¹³ Hostert, New Energy Outlook 2024.

¹⁴ Suparna Ray, Solar and Battery Storage to Make up 81% of New U.S. Electric-Generating Capacity in 2024, Today in Energy, U.S. Energy Information Administration (February 15, 2024). Available at <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=61424>

¹⁵ PV Capacity by Segment, Solar Industry Update, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, (Accessed 10/9/2024). Available at: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/jarett.zuboy/viz/PVCapacitybySegment/Dashboard1>

¹⁶ Hledik, Real Reliability: The Value of Virtual Power.

¹⁷ Why Local Solar for All Costs Less: A New Roadmap for the Lowest Cost Grid, Coalition for Community Solar Access, Vibrant Clean Energy, Vote Solar, and Local Solar For All (December 2020). Available at <https://www.localsolarforall.org/roadmap>

Our Strategic Path Forward

Vote Solar was built to meet this moment.

For our first 20 years, we defined a new path in energy policy by building the social license for solar resources and finding ways to drive down cost through volume and policy. We have succeeded. Vote Solar catalyzed a national movement, leading hundreds of regulatory interventions and legislative campaigns across 40 states. Today, our work has made it so one in three people in the United States live in a state with a legal requirement for a transition to 100% clean electricity by mid-century. The transition to a carbon-free energy system is now an achievable reality — thanks to technological advances in renewable energy, solar’s low-cost due to building economies of scale, and its overwhelming support from people across the country. However, that transition will not happen fast enough unless we disrupt the stranglehold of monopoly utilities and fossil fuel interests over our energy decision-makers.

All our work is guided by our **mission** to realize a 100% clean energy future through a solutions-driven, people-first approach. Our **north star** is clean energy for all. Our **vision** is a resilient world powered by the sun.



Over the next five years, we will focus on the four following goals to live into our mission while making progress towards our vision:



Goal 1: Accelerate the deployment of local solar solutions



Goal 2: Transform the energy system to center local solar solutions and replace fossil fuel combustion



Goal 3: Increase the power of frontline communities to win holistic, equitable outcomes and contribute to a durable, transformative movement for a clean energy system



Goal 4: Build awareness and support for an equitable transition to clean energy, activating communities and key stakeholders

Vote Solar is more dedicated than ever to taking on the critical fights that speed up solar deployment and ensure equitable access for all. We bring our core strengths to these debates. Our long-standing regulatory and policy **expertise** inspires us to develop innovative solutions. Our focus on **equity** elevates the powerful voices of frontline communities in all energy conversations with lawmakers, regulators, and other decision-makers. Our **on-the-ground presence** in more than 20 states advances bold action in state houses and regulatory commissions. Our credibility and trusted relationships enable us to **build bridges** across stakeholders, uniting diverse coalitions in powerful campaigns to meet energy and community needs.

By leaning into these actions and unique strengths, we aim to build the following achievements in the next 3-5 years:

- ➔ Customers, decision makers, and energy system utilities and operators are prioritizing local solar and other clean energy resources over fossil fuels, leading to deployment of local solar solutions up to five times faster than our current pace.
- ➔ State-level energy policies, regulations, and programs are accountable to the communities and people they serve, particularly those facing the first and worst impacts of climate change.
- ➔ A broad and durable coalition of clean energy champions – from decision-makers to advocates – centers equity and justice in decision-making to ensure clean energy delivers sustainable benefits to all people.

When successful, by 2035 our strategy will enable:

- ➔ **Electricity generation 100% powered by clean energy**, maximizing local solar, other clean technologies, and rapid decarbonization of all other sectors (e.g., transportation and heating and cooling) to mitigate and adapt to climate change at the urgency required.
- ➔ **The energy system is accessible, affordable, resilient, and reliable** for all communities regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or geographic location.
- ➔ **Regulatory decisions are shaped by inclusive, participatory decision-making processes, and a more activated customer base**, giving people greater control over their energy future.

This strategic plan outlines how Vote Solar will advance these goals to lead and accelerate the shift toward equitable clean energy in the coming years. We will do so by applying our **Theory of Change** to meet this moment.

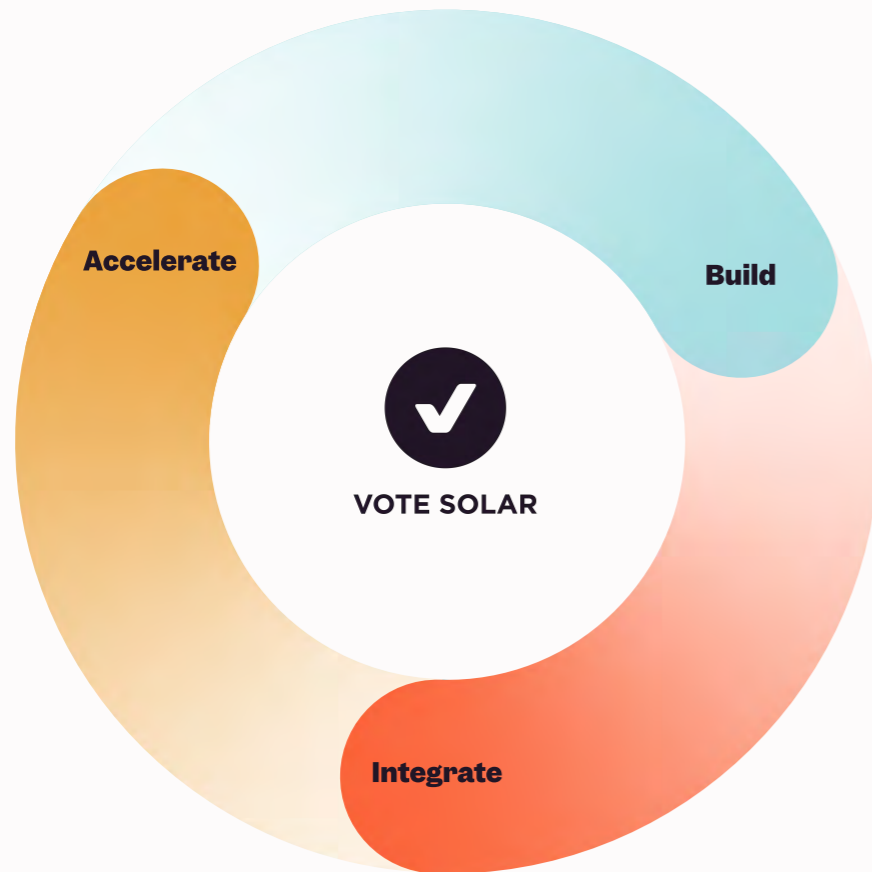


What do we mean when we say “frontline communities”?

Frontline communities are those that have historically faced multiple systems of oppression, such as colonization, capitalism, racism and patriarchy. They are the least responsible for the problems of the current energy system but the most impacted by issues like energy burden, negative health impacts from pollution, and climate change. These communities include Indigenous Peoples, Tribal Nations, Black, refugees, immigrants, and low-wealth populations. Despite their challenges, they are at the forefront of resistance. They demand real solutions for their survival and the rights of future generations. Frontline Partners are organizations or leaders representing these communities, directly serving and being accountable to them.

Theory of Change

Vote Solar works to enable the state-level policy and regulatory context that builds, integrates, and accelerates the momentum needed to transform our energy system. There are two elements to this work: the technical and the social.



→ **Build** state-level policy and regulatory solutions that deploy local clean energy. Build relationships and powerful alliances with energy and justice organizations through education and learning.

→ **Integrate** local solar solutions into the larger energy system by using the collective power of these resources to make the system more affordable, reliable, and resilient. Integrate community voices and interests into regulatory and energy policy proceedings.

→ **Accelerate** clean energy adoption through modernized and flexible grids. Accelerate progress through community empowerment and demonstrated impact.

Technical

What: Building local solar solutions is a critical part of the 100% clean energy system. Through our detailed modeling and expert testimony we make the case for utilities to integrate local solar into utility and energy system planning in a way that rapidly unlocks the tremendous value of solar solutions at the urgency required. By demonstrating the benefits of that integration to decision-makers and customers, we will incentivize support and accelerate further build out of clean energy infrastructure, creating a flywheel where new markets are established and more deployment opportunities arise.

How: Vote Solar has a deep bench of technical experts. We bring significant experience and understanding of the tools needed to advance innovative regulatory and policy solutions that ensure adoption of practical solutions to rapidly deploy local solar and improve system efficiencies.

Social

What: Vote Solar staff are focused on bringing together diverse coalitions and building campaigns that are responsive to the unique needs and varying political contexts within each state and community. Through our regional presence in every state we operate in, we are able to build trusted relationships with national, state and local advocates and industry, especially with frontline communities who have the most to gain from this transition. By integrating diverse views and needs into energy policy, these policies provide benefits to a broader population. These demonstrated benefits in combination with a stronger, broader coalition lead to the durable political will required to make bolder, accelerated progress in the future.

How: Vote Solar builds trusted local relationships over time to become a bridge between frontline communities, energy and environmental advocates and energy decision-makers, enabling increasingly powerful coalitions and the largest possible clean energy constituency.

Our Theory of Change in Action – Disrupting Utility Giants in Michigan

Since 2020, Vote Solar has been an active presence in the state, taking on utility giants like DTE Energy and delivering decisive victories for communities across the state. By intervening in the most important regulatory proceedings for these utilities we ensure each fight leaves us, and our increasingly broad coalition, stronger for the next one.

Michigan residents face some of the highest energy rates for the worst service in the country. Black, Indigenous and people of color communities receive even worse service for the same rates, and utility companies avoid accountability for increasingly frequent blackouts that endanger low-wealth Michigan families and people with severe health issues. Despite this, until recently, Michigan had one of the most restrictive caps on residential solar in the country at just 1%. DTE customers in particular face steep energy bills, with low-wealth households paying disproportionate percentages of their household income.

In addition to honing our arguments and educating the Michigan Public Service Commission on the value of local solar solutions, Vote Solar built power with an increasingly diverse coalition in this arcane regulatory space. Working with a set of frontline community partners from Detroit, we listened to their expertise on community challenges and needs and created solutions together. Using our advanced economic modeling, we took their tangible testimony on the needs of individual families and communities and combined it with the data and analysis to counter utility arguments.

After months of negotiations, and an energized, coalition-driven public engagement campaign, in July 2023 Vote Solar and our partners reached a landmark agreement with DTE – the most progressive Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) settlement in Michigan’s history.

Thanks to our intervention, the 20-year IRP commits DTE to retiring its coal plants by 2032 – years ahead of the original schedule – building 3,800 MW of renewables and 780 MW of storage by 2030, and increasing the cap on rooftop solar from 1% to 6%. As an additional condition of the settlement, DTE Energy agreed to allocate \$38 million to organizations and programs designed to provide bill payment assistance and energy upgrades to income-qualified families, \$8 million of which will help implement home readiness, energy efficiency, distributed generation and energy storage programs for low-wealth communities; DTE’s original plan had no provisions for low-wealth assistance programs at all.

Our intervention in DTE’s rate cases – formal regulatory processes in which a utility company proposes changes to the rates it charges its customers – resulted in critical victories that are further advancing equitable distribution, reliability, and environmental justice for Michigan ratepayers. In the final ruling for the DTE case, the Michigan Public Service Commission slashed the utility’s requested rate increase by a whopping \$357.5 million, rejected a punitive solar customer fee, and committed to holding the utility accountable to its existing environmental justice commitments.



Key Audiences and Partners

To meet the challenge of transitioning the US energy system, we know that we cannot do this work alone. In order to achieve a 100% clean energy future, we will need to nurture relationships and credibility with key audiences and partners, as they are critical to building lasting change and ensuring solutions are scalable and inclusive.

State decision-makers

Elected and appointed officials, particularly those at public utility commissions, are key decision-makers on energy policy and programs. Some come to their roles with deep knowledge, while others are new to the complexities of energy policy or the specifics of solar policy. Using our technical expertise and position as a trusted partner, Vote Solar can serve as a resource for these decision-makers and ensure proposed solutions chart an effective path to a safe climate and address the needs of frontline communities.



Allied advocates

Allied advocates – including those from climate, clean energy and environmental justice fields – come to their work from different backgrounds and perspectives but are committed to taking action to improve the state of their communities, the country, and our world. They work to influence decision-makers through grassroots mobilization, expertise, lived experience, and organizing. Vote Solar can bridge the concerns of various advocacy groups and individuals and channel them into actionable steps toward a 100% clean grid that equitably serves all.



Frontline Communities

Climate change impacts all of us. However, there are disproportionate impacts on low-wealth, frontline, and communities of color, who also face disproportionate hurdles to adapt to these impacts due to historical socioeconomic and energy systems that have left them behind. These communities have the most to gain from this transition, with insight into what is needed and the passion and political will to win. By working alongside frontline leaders to understand and elevate their communities' needs and voices, Vote Solar can advance a more equitable clean energy future.



Climate Influencers

Climate influencers are individuals with significant industry, social, or economic influence who can shape public opinion, drive policy changes, and inspire collective action toward a sustainable future. These individuals come from diverse backgrounds, including philanthropy, business, solar industry, media, academia, and other sectors where their voices and actions carry weight. By engaging with climate influencers, Vote Solar can amplify our mission, grow our impact, and foster strategic partnerships.



Supercharging our Work: Vote Solar Action Fund

As a 501(c)3, Vote Solar is a strictly non-partisan advocate for the use and benefits of solar energy. That does not mean we shy away from legislative and policy fights that require campaigns to educate elected officials. As a key part of our theory of change, we consistently look for ways to support and improve energy and climate justice policy in states across the country. The Vote Solar Action Fund, our sister 501(c)4 organization, amplifies that work by enabling more flexibility to engage in public policy fights. The Vote Solar Action Fund helps ensure we have the resources needed to bolster messaging targeted at elected officials with the power to push forward bold legislation that supports a rapid transition to the affordable, resilient clean energy grid of the future.



How Centering Equity and Justice Accelerates Climate Progress

The current fossil-fueled economy is at the core of so many environmental and economic injustices, from local air and water pollution to skyrocketing energy bills. We are already reeling from the first symptoms of a warming planet, and further climate change will continue to exacerbate not just these impacts, but the systemic inequalities of our energy system causing disproportionate harm. Ultimately, these disparities make us all vulnerable. We can only ward off the worst effects of climate change by creating solutions that work for everyone.

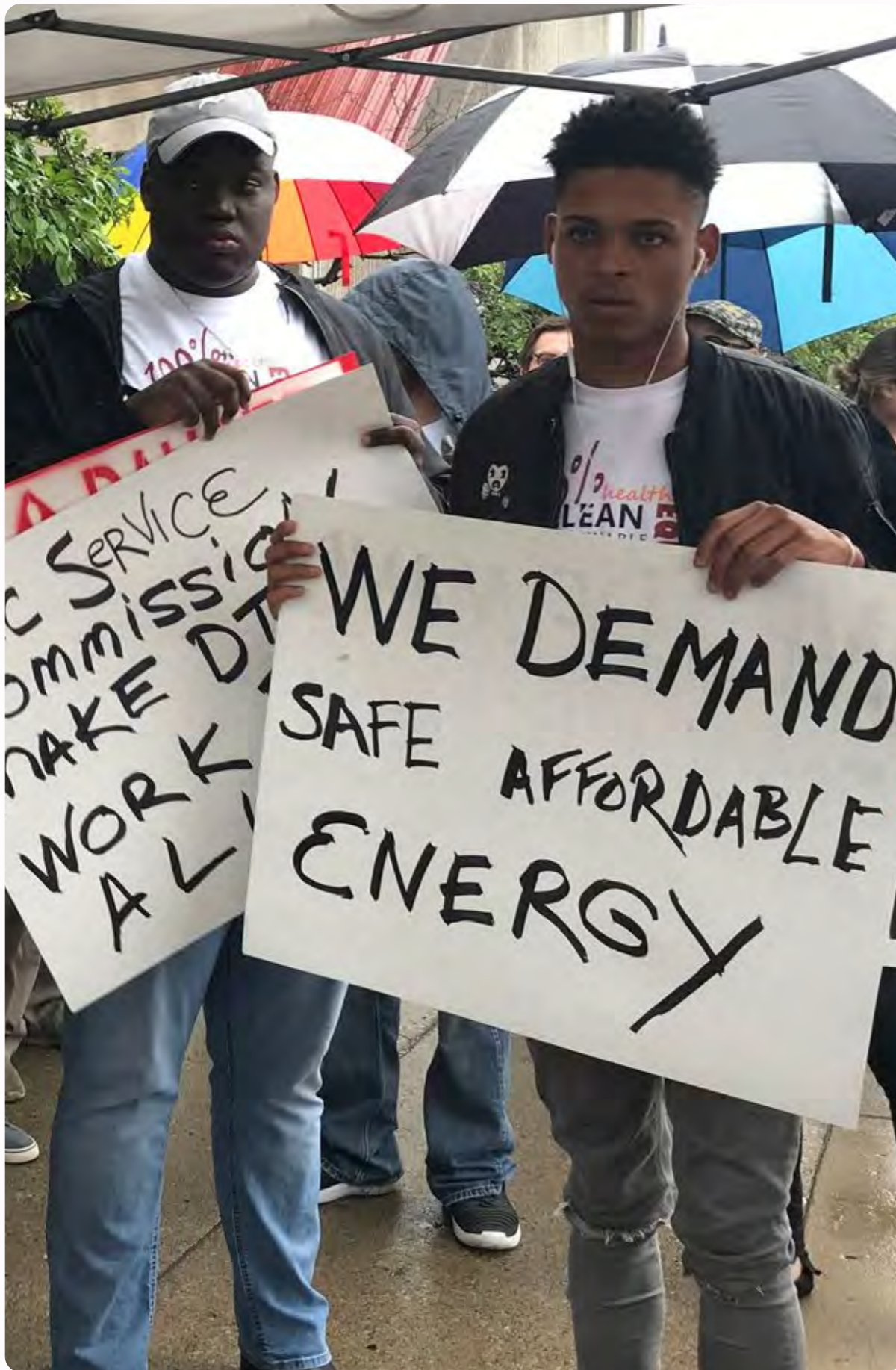
The current for-profit utility business model inherently undervalues community needs in favor of profits and monopoly power, often driven by outmoded fossil interests. The status quo of building fossil fuel infrastructure has led to high energy bills and adverse health impacts to frontline communities. Utility ownership results in a lack of control and decision-making by local communities and energy consumers.

The transition to clean energy can solve real kitchen-table issues for communities as well as build a pathway to a future with more energy security and fewer adverse health impacts. Specifically, local solar represents a transformative opportunity to mitigate the worst impacts of the current monopoly-based, fossil-powered utility model.

Yet, without intervention, the current system ensures that the low- and moderate-wealth households comprising about half the US population lack access to solar. Many cannot afford it, are renters, or their homes and community infrastructure are not solar-ready.

Holding utilities accountable for ensuring equitable access to solar is a foundational step in shifting the business and regulatory models that govern our energy choices. Local solar offers frontline communities a decentralized energy source that can lower electricity bills, build energy independence, and increase access to clean energy. By harnessing solar this way, communities can reduce their reliance on expensive and often unreliable utility services.





To bring the necessary accountability and change to the system, we focus on distributive and procedural justice. Distributive justice in the clean energy transition means communities historically left behind have an equitable share in the benefits, including affordability, more resilient and reliable energy services and improved health outcomes. Our work seeks to reverse historical energy disinvestment and center frontline communities in this positive change. It drives new investment in frontline communities and creates jobs close to adversely impacted job seekers.

Procedural justice in this work is achieved by prioritizing the participation of diverse and inclusive coalitions, particularly those historically shut out of energy decision-making. We intentionally build capacity and power with communities of color, low-wealth, and other frontline stakeholders to break down barriers to legislative and regulatory participation, and direct decision-maker engagement. We uplift the voices of these partners in our communications efforts and policy discussions. We facilitate participation in legislative and regulatory proceedings to ensure more stakeholders are meaningfully engaged, heard, and included.

Vote Solar's Just Partnership Principles

- ✓ Humility
- ✓ Self-transformation
- ✓ Intersectionality
- ✓ Honoring frontline leadership
- ✓ Clear intentions
- ✓ Building inclusive coalitions
- ✓ Inclusive decision making
- ✓ Conflict management

Centering equity in this way makes our movement stronger by creating solutions that are not only just, but also more durable and politically resilient. Through our success, and guided by our [Just Partnership Principles](#), we demonstrate that distributive and procedural justice are critical to strengthening our advocacy for clean energy reforms and creating a better, more sustainable energy system. Experience over two decades and in states across the country has taught us that equity-oriented clean energy policies bring the political power needed to win. Working in deep partnerships and building diverse coalitions delivers comprehensive, swift and durable climate progress.

The Solutions

Over the next five years, we will focus on four key goals described in this section. We will deploy strategies through the lens of our theory of change to ensure we **build, integrate** and **accelerate** the transition to a 100% clean energy future.



Goal 1: Accelerate the deployment of local solar solutions

We will drive the widespread and equitable deployment of rooftop and local solar through better electricity rate design, transparent and predictable compensation for customers generating solar energy, and simplified ways of connecting local solar to the grid. We will ensure the rules enable all consumers to easily choose solar and share in the benefits of these investments.

Vote Solar is one of the few organizations with the technical understanding and capacity to advance equitable solar policy at the state level. We have the relationships, technical expertise, and credibility to understand the needs of energy consumers and communities. With a strong, diverse, and empowered base, we translate these needs into practical, widely supported policy proposals that guide decision-makers toward an equitable clean energy future.

Accelerating the Deployment of Local Solar in Illinois

In Illinois, Vote Solar has played a pivotal role in driving clean energy deployment enabled by the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), a landmark equity-centric bill signed into law in 2021. The culmination of many years of work from people and organizations representing a wide range of interests, this historic piece of legislation is a testament to what can be accomplished when we come together in service of people and the planet.

Vote Solar's work in deep partnership with clean energy advocates, energy justice leaders, environmental advocates, faith communities, consumer advocates, business leaders, and other allies was crucial in bridging the gap across various interests to win on CEJA. Not only were we able to set Illinois on a clear path to 100% carbon-free power by 2045, we also secured an interim target of 40% renewable by 2030 and 6.5 GW of rooftop and community solar, with 715 MW of that solar reserved for development by disadvantaged businesses. CEJA's robust framework and significant financial backing have already led to the procurement of over 3,500 MW of wind and solar energy, including more than 1,500 MW for rooftop and community solar projects.



Key Strategies to Accomplish This Goal

Build local solar

- ✓ Provide technical expertise to advance state policy and regulation that prioritizes building local solar, especially for frontline communities.
- ✓ Advocate for rate and regulatory reform and broader energy and climate policy to enable streamlined and accessible local solar solutions.

Integrate local solar into the energy system

- ✓ Advocate for integrating solar and other clean energy sources into existing energy system infrastructure in a way that accelerates the deployment of local solar solutions.
- ✓ Build broad understanding among decision-makers and other stakeholders about how local solar solutions are important components of a 100% clean energy system.
- ✓ Highlight the community, resilience, and economic benefits of integrating local solar into the energy system, using ongoing communications and legislative and regulatory campaigns.

Accelerate demand for local solar

- ✓ Enhance partner interest and capacity to support local solar solutions for frontline communities.
- ✓ Stop the expansion in fossil gas generation and infrastructure in favor of portfolios of local solar solutions and other clean energy resources.
- ✓ Articulate why broad solar deployment is better for consumers than more expensive and less effective fossil fuel investments that favor company and shareholder profits.





Goal 2: Transform the energy system to center local solar solutions and replace fossil fuel combustion

We will promote policies that incentivize utilities to create a diverse portfolio of clean distributed resources, large-scale renewables, and grid modernization to replace fossil gas and coal generation, sharply reducing carbon emissions. We will hold utilities accountable for implementing rigorous climate solutions in their resource and grid planning. We will directly challenge short-term, profit-driven investments in dirty and dangerous fossil fuels that delay or displace critical clean energy infrastructure. We will show that solar can meet our needs better and cheaper than new or existing fossil infrastructure.

The US energy system was originally conceived as being for the public benefit and was built using public funds. It is one of the most complex and powerful centrally engineered systems that humans have ever built. However, for over a century regulators have been setting the rules for the system to be run by mostly for-profit utilities. These rules have tended to support the interests and control of established utilities and fossil fuel companies and their shareholders, and to resist or suppress innovation.

Vote Solar has the expertise to understand where opportunities exist for large scale integration of rooftop and local solar into the energy system. We have developed the tools and analysis to insert this knowledge into Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) proceedings at regulatory bodies, as a preferred resource over fossil fuels. Vote Solar also has the respect of utilities and regulators to integrate equity considerations into their decision-making processes and credibility among frontline partners to help advance their interest in these proceedings.

Transforming Minnesota's Energy System to Center Local Solutions

Over the last several years, Vote Solar has actively engaged in Xcel Energy's IRP processes in Minnesota, demonstrating that heavy investment in local solar solutions instead of fossil gas infrastructure is the most cost-effective and equitable solution to meet the state's future energy demands. The choice of local solar solutions also creates more jobs, a cleaner environment, and more affordable energy bills for Minnesotans.

Because of Vote Solar and our partners' intervention in the 2022 Xcel IRP, which mandated 2.5GW of solar by 2030, the 2024 plan filing required Xcel to model distributed generation – decentralized, smaller-scale energy sources – as a resource for the first time. As a result of our efforts, the latest IRP includes the integration of over 1,800 MW of additional distributed energy resources like local solar, energy efficiency, and demand response by 2030.

Building on these successes, Vote Solar continues to work with coalition and environmental justice partners to promote the equitable integration of distributed resources and grid modernization in utility planning processes across the country. This has set a new standard that other states will look to as the nation moves toward a 100% clean energy future.



Key Strategies to Accomplish This Goal

Build a modernized energy system

- ✓ Advocate for a modern, affordable, reliable, and resilient energy system that increases the adoption of local solar solutions and realizes their potential.
- ✓ Reform utility resource planning and procurement to properly and appropriately encourage investing in local solar solutions (e.g., Virtual Power Plants) as a resource.

Integrate local solar into energy system planning and utility business models

- ✓ Advance new approaches for equitable energy distribution system planning and management that value local solar solutions and overcome technical barriers to adoption.
- ✓ Advance new utility business models and planning approaches that align utility behavior with climate and clean energy goals.
- ✓ Advocate for consideration of affordability and equity outcomes as part of all utility regulation and implementation.
- ✓ Require regulators and utilities to concretely value the benefits, reliability, and performance of local solar solutions.

Accelerate equitable grid and utility reforms through power building

- ✓ Strengthen partnerships and capacity among frontline communities to drive greater participation and engagement in state legislation and regulation on utility and energy system reform.
- ✓ Hold regulators, utilities, and legislatures accountable to energy customers for existing and future climate and energy goals and commitments.
- ✓ Strengthen the resolve and ability for public utility commissions to discipline and correct utility behavior that is counter to the public interest (e.g. lobbying against reasonable competition).
- ✓ Effectively communicate how new models and reforms can better address the needs of our partners, allies, and the communities we serve.
- ✓ Communicate how current regulatory and utility practices are hurting customers, resulting in high energy burdens, lack of reliability, and environmental and public health impacts.





Goal 3: Increase the power of frontline communities to win holistic, equitable outcomes and contribute to a durable, transformative movement for a clean energy system

We will collaborate with diverse, equity-focused coalitions to remove obstacles and expand opportunities to speed solar development benefiting frontline communities and households. We will level the playing field by establishing more equitable and inclusive decision-making processes. We will amplify community leadership to win outcomes and build movement power.

Transitioning to 100% clean energy on time and at scale requires taking on some of the largest, most profitable companies in the US. Broad, diverse, and aligned coalitions drive powerful movements necessary to advance progress on climate solutions that work for everyone. To shift control, we must center the lived experiences of people residing in frontline communities, grow their capacity to engage and influence decision-makers, and mobilize inclusive coalitions to exercise their political power and demand change.

Vote Solar has successfully played the role of bridge builder and connector to bring historically excluded voices into policy and regulatory decision-making. We engage in powerful, inclusive coalitions nationwide that are harnessing substantial political power, including the Massachusetts Equitable Clean Energy Table, the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, and the South Carolina Energy Equity Coalition. Building on our successes, we will continue to grow our capacity to work in partnerships that win clean energy solutions and build a durable movement that accelerates transformational change.

Increasing the Power of Frontline Communities: New Jersey Shines Coalition

Vote Solar has built and served as a leader in the New Jersey Shines coalition, which is focused on driving solar as a solution for environmental injustice and economic inequity. Founded to help establish an effective community solar program, the coalition has developed its shared vision and technical policy expertise to advise the state on its path to 100% clean energy.

New Jersey Shines successfully drove the creation of a state Office of Clean Energy Equity, solved a technical challenge to low-income serving community solar by establishing a system for income qualification, and securing a permanent community solar program. With each successive campaign, the coalition and its individual groups, including environmental justice organizations, have built more political power in the state capital and honed their policy and regulatory knowledge. The Garden State is now considering legislation to secure a climate safe economy, and New Jersey Shines is at the table to help negotiate the final package.



Key Strategies to Accomplish This Goal

Build powerful partnerships, coalitions, and campaigns

- ✓ Build staff expertise on procedural justice through internal capacity-building training, best practices, and tools, with the goal of effectively developing, participating in, and supporting more just partnerships and inclusive coalitions.
- ✓ Co-create and co-lead advocacy campaigns on energy issues while endorsing and amplifying advocacy campaigns on related issues (e.g., housing, transportation) that are the highest priority for frontline communities.

Integrate and elevate frontline voices

- ✓ Engage Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities to break down barriers to participation and self-determination in legislative and regulatory spaces.
- ✓ Help build power and elevate voices of frontline communities in legislative and regulatory advocacy campaigns.
- ✓ Amplify the work and voices of frontline leaders by continuing to administer key Vote Solar programming and awards, including the Access and Equity Advisory Committee and the Dr. Espanola Jackson Energy Justice Award.

Accelerate the growth and impact of diverse coalitions for clean energy

- ✓ Demonstrate the value of inclusive processes to regulators, clean energy advocates, and other key decision-makers, using tangible examples from Vote Solar's work.
- ✓ Conduct annual evaluations of partnerships in each state, set goals, and take action to ensure that coalition members and partners represent the populations most impacted by clean energy issues.





Goal 4: Build awareness and support for an equitable transition to clean energy, activating communities and key stakeholders

We will reach and empower consumer, community, environmental, and other energy sector stakeholders at the regional and state levels with an inspiring and actionable national 100% clean energy vision. The vision will focus on delivering climate, energy, and environmental justice through deployment of local solar solutions. We will work alongside partners to position community experts as thought leaders, shaping the narrative around a reimagined energy system with both consumers and policy makers.

We will make the case that an energy system built on equity and community empowerment will provide greater affordability, reliability, and resilience for all – and is the fastest, most achievable path to a 100% clean energy future. A compelling case and human-centered stories build advocacy partnerships and coalitions and strengthen the movement across partisan divides. By helping community members envision themselves in a clean energy future, we also will expand participation in a revitalized energy system. Public recognition of solar as a tool for empowerment strengthens policy and market success.

Vote Solar is committed to bringing the lived experiences and voices of frontline communities into regulatory and policy advocacy. Our staff have built powerful relationships that provide opportunities to identify, lift up and amplify stories on local and national platforms.

Helping Enfield, North Carolina be a Beacon of Community-Driven Energy Solutions

In North Carolina, Vote Solar is leading with solar to help realize a small town's affordable housing, food security, and workforce development goals. Enfield, a predominantly Black town in Halifax County, faces significant economic challenges, including an aging housing stock and a median household income of just \$22,500. A majority of the town's residents are also energy-burdened – an average of 8% of a household's income goes to energy costs. Enfield has a municipal utility that buys its power through a contract with Duke Energy – a situation faced by many other towns and cities across the state. As Duke has demonstrated an incredible influence over energy regulators, municipalities like Enfield need a point of leverage over them.

Ahead of the town's utility negotiation, Vote Solar is collaborating with the Center for Energy Education, Sustainable Capital Advisers, and town administrators to explore solar energy projects – like a community center or cooperative farm powered by solar and storage – and leverage federal funding opportunities from the Inflation Reduction Act. Our goal is for Enfield to serve as model and a beacon of community-driven energy solutions in North Carolina and beyond. We envision Enfield as a strong counterparty in negotiations with Duke over where its energy comes from.



Key Strategies to Accomplish This Goal

Build our audience and influence to increase support for equitable solar solutions

- ✓ Invest in audience growth with a focus on frontline communities to build Vote Solar’s membership base and continue incorporating impacted voices into our campaigns.
- ✓ Educate decision-makers and influencers to build support for equitable clean energy policy.
- ✓ Help build the energy literacy and capacity of frontline communities so they can make informed decisions on energy policy that will best serve their needs.

Integrate community benefits into public discourse

- ✓ Analyze and communicate community energy and non-energy benefits of clean energy, including affordability, reliability, resilience, health, and jobs.
- ✓ Collect and share compelling, real-world stories about the beneficial impacts of equitable energy advocacy and solutions to build support and influence decision-making.

Accelerate broad awareness and engagement in the local solar movement

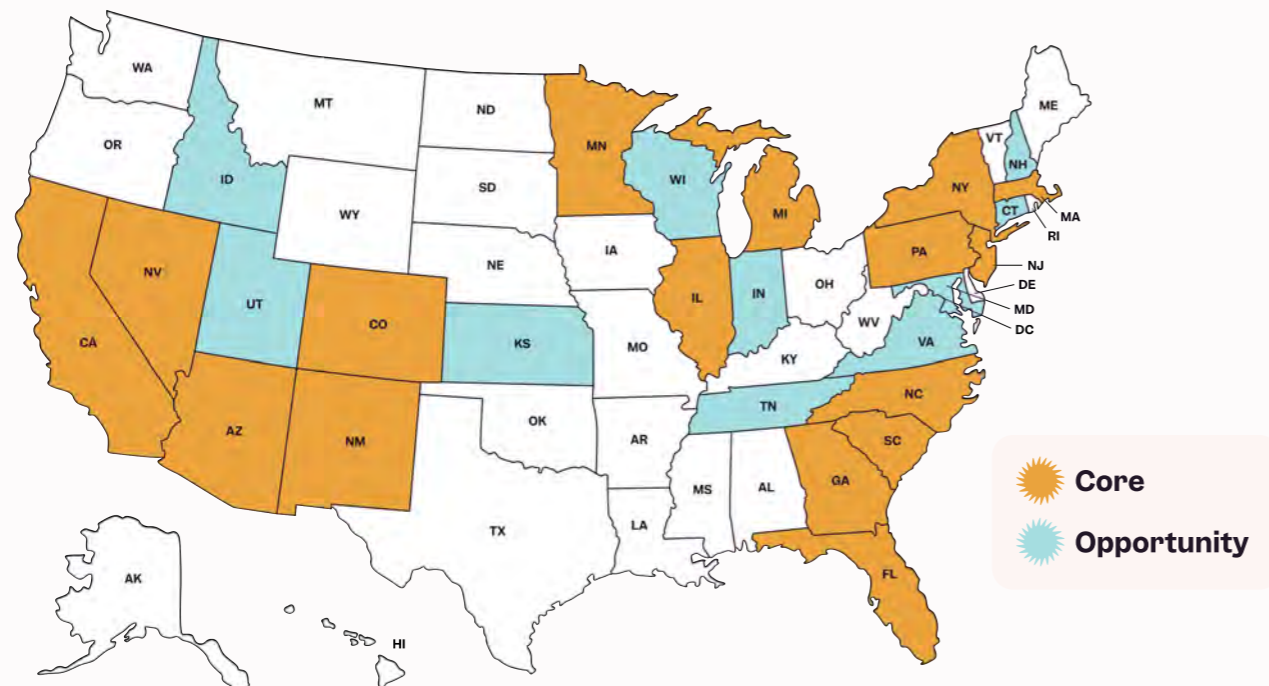
- ✓ Mobilize partners and allies through effective, compelling, timely calls-to-action.
- ✓ Combat disinformation that would hinder progress towards our clean energy future.
- ✓ Draw connections across state and regional campaigns to build nationwide narratives that communicate the scale of the energy crisis and motivate communities to engage.



Evolving the Organization for Success

Thanks to our previous strategic plan, Vote Solar successfully established regional teams that are well positioned to address the unique challenges and harness opportunities within our priority states. This structure has enhanced our ability to build trusted partnerships with regional, state, and local stakeholders. The strategic planning process has confirmed that this approach is effective, and now is the time to double down. Moving forward, Vote Solar's organizational structure, capacity, and planning will remain focused on maximizing our impact at the state level.

In deciding where to focus Vote Solar's work geographically, we analyzed a combination of several factors including existing partnerships and coalitions, policy opportunities, and the need for Vote Solar's particular skillset. First are our core set of states where we are building power year over year. We initiate and help lead strong coalitions and use multi-year strategies to drive bold progress. In order to drive our goals in these states, we need to ensure Vote Solar can build momentum to have the greatest impact, with regulatory expertise, strategic political and campaign engagement and strong communications capacity. In another set of states we will engage when focused, discrete opportunities arise that require our skills – most often our regulatory expertise – and consider more committed engagement as we grow.



To meet the ambitious goals outlined in this plan, Vote Solar must leverage our current expertise and full range of skills, applying them extensively across the states and campaigns where we already have a presence. Next, we need to strengthen both our specialized technical expertise and our communications team to maximize the impact of our campaigns nationwide. By investing in these essential functions – deepening our skills and expanding our staff – we can better leverage best practices and victories across the country. This approach ensures that each success builds momentum, making our collective impact far greater than the sum of individual campaigns. And finally, we have to fund and retain our existing, expert team by continuing to be a financially sound organization and a great place to work.

In addition to growing our programs teams, it's essential that we build the capacity to manage a larger, more dynamic organization. We will invest in strengthening management, staff support, and operations to ensure we run smoothly at scale. To enhance our field expertise and advocacy effectiveness, we will focus on skill-building for existing staff and hire specialized talent to meet our mission's needs, such as in economic modeling, legal expertise, and digital communications. By aligning our internal growth with our strategic goals, we'll be better equipped to drive impact in the areas outlined in this plan.

Tracking our Progress

As a technical organization, we take tracking our progress seriously and bring the same rigor to this as we do to the pursuit of our mission. We have developed a set of metrics to measure progress on our four strategic goals and determine our impact. These new metrics are described below, with greater detail in Appendix B. Vote Solar will continue to regularly track additional metrics to better understand the impact of specific campaigns or initiatives.



Goal 1: Accelerate the deployment of local solar solutions

In addition to tracking the overall amount of solar secured through our efforts, we will fill out the picture by measuring the widespread and equitable deployment of local solar solutions. In order to take a people-first approach, we have to make sure that people are actually benefiting from our work.

New metrics:

- ✓ Amount of local solar secured
- ✓ Amount of local solar installed in frontline communities
- ✓ Percentage of customer electricity usage powered by solar



Goal 3: Increase the power of frontline communities to win holistic, equitable outcomes and contribute to a durable, transformative movement for a clean energy system

We will measure the impact of our partnerships with diverse, equity-focused organizations and coalitions to remove obstacles and expand opportunities that make solar more accessible and affordable for frontline communities and households.

New metrics:

- ✓ Percent of Vote Solar campaigns with frontline community partners engaged
- ✓ Percent of Vote Solar campaigns where frontline community partners assume a leadership role
- ✓ Number of frontline partners who, with the support of Vote Solar, participate directly in a regulatory proceeding



Goal 2: Transform the energy system to center local solar solutions and replace fossil fuel combustion

To truly transform the energy sector, we need to offset fossil capacity through widespread change to the regulation, financial motivation, and operation of electric utilities so their incentives are fully aligned with societal goals. We are aiming for 20-30% of utility capacity procurement to come from local solar, mostly attached to batteries.

New metrics:

- ✓ Amount of gas and other fossil fuel combustion replaced by renewable portfolios
- ✓ Amount of local solar solutions fully valued as an asset (as a percentage of a utility's overall resource portfolio)
- ✓ Number of utility resource plans that account for non-energy costs and benefits in approved procurement plans



Goal 4: Build awareness and support for an equitable transition to clean energy, activating communities and key stakeholders

To advance our mission of equitable clean energy, it is essential that we not only articulate a clear and compelling vision but understand how this vision reaches, inspires, and mobilizes diverse communities and stakeholders. By tracking our progress in these areas, we can ensure that our strategies are effectively driving awareness, engagement, and action.

New metrics:

- ✓ Vote Solar's Share of Voice across social media, earned media, and search analysis
- ✓ Placement and audiences of earned media coverage across state- and local-level traditional media outlets with an increased focus on hyper-local news outlets
- ✓ Number of advocacy actions taken (e.g., petition signatures, contacts with elected officials, event participation)

A Note from the Chair

Vote Solar has played a pivotal role in most of the significant trends in the solar revolution. From supporting the groundbreaking California Solar Initiative to more recent and highly ambitious legislation in Michigan, Illinois and Colorado, and a host of other states, Vote Solar is always on point and looking for opportunities to push the clean energy transition forward. With a powerful platform, and a depth of experience, this organization is uniquely positioned to sound the alarm about climate change and injustice, while also presenting an optimistic and powerful vision for the future.

As the Chair of the Board, I see staff's outsized efforts in front of public utility commissions, with unparalleled expertise in the details of both policy and implementation. I am proud of the clarity of their voice and the success of their efforts. As an organization, we make it crystal clear that solar at all scales is a key resource for policy makers to utilize in addressing the pressing energy, affordability and resilience issues facing our electricity grid.

As a business leader, I know that Vote Solar's success translates into success for the solar industry while holding us accountable to the goals of the movement at large. Vote Solar works to ensure that our interests and opportunities align with the needs of the communities we serve. This independent and symbiotic relationship is a powerful tool for getting us to a robust 100% clean energy system that is both just and affordable.

This strategic plan sets Vote Solar up to continue speaking truth to power, with a realistic and actionable plan to move the country forward. By building more solar state by state, especially community and rooftop solar, and integrating it into our grid planning and operation, we will be able to quickly transition away from harmful fossil fuels to a sustainable, solar powered world.



Zaid Ashai

Vote Solar Board Chair
Founder & CEO, Nexamp

Call to Action



We must transition to 100% clean energy to stave off the worst effects of climate change. Local solar solutions are widely available, inexpensive, resilient, and provide multiple benefits to communities harmed by the current energy system. These are people-first solutions that empower frontline communities, whose voices and actions are essential to ensuring equitable and lasting energy transformation.

Vote Solar has been at the vanguard of the climate movement for over two decades, advancing clean energy wins across the country. Our combination of policy and regulatory expertise and trusted partnerships with frontline communities uniquely positions us to continue leading the way. This plan outlines Vote Solar's strategic focus, the necessity of centering equity in the clean energy transition, desired short- and long-term impacts, and key strategies for achieving them. The transition to a clean, affordable, resilient, and reliable energy system is closer than ever before and we need your support to ensure it is done right.

We can't do this without you – your support is essential to creating a resilient world, powered by the sun. Together, we can make the transition to 100% clean energy happen, and ensure that the benefits reach every community.



Appendix A: About This Strategic Planning Process

Vote Solar undertook this strategic planning process in 2024. It built on existing assets, including our 2018 strategic plan, our recently updated mission framework, and an internal assessment of what staff need from a strategic plan. Strategy development was informed by scoping interviews with 36 individuals from a diverse range of perspectives and expertise, including the Vote Solar Leadership Team, a selected cross-section of staff, Board members, and a range of external partners to understand their thinking about Vote Solar's strengths, unique contribution to the climate field, and opportunities and threats in the spaces and places in which we work. Themes from the scoping interviews informed strategy discussions at our April 2024 Board retreat and May 2024 staff retreat. All of these insights informed discussions by a core team of Vote Solar leadership and staff, who met multiple times throughout the process to refine the core elements of this strategic plan.

An important takeaway from strategy interviews and discussions was the need for Vote Solar to sharpen its focus to areas where the organization has unique strengths and can make the greatest impact. Referenced in our discussions as the "sweet spot" and the "Vote Solar-shaped hole," our emphasis on **focus** provided a durable throughline in the planning process.

This strategic plan has identified a critical and unique role for Vote Solar to play in the climate action movement. Our skill set is unique and there are many opportunities for us to drive change. Without focus we run the risk of falling short of the wholesale transformation of our energy economy required to meet the demands of climate change. To keep this focus, we seek support externally and internally to achieve these goals and we invite accountability both externally and internally to remaining laser focused on this path forward.



Appendix B: Strategic Plan Metrics

Goal	Metric	Description	Significance of Increasing Metric
1. Accelerate deployment of local solar solutions	1A. Amount of local solar secured	Measures the total GW of rooftop and local solar installed each year, aiming to keep on pace for at least 250 GW by 2040.	Indicates trend toward 100% clean energy future with local solar solutions as key components.
	1B. Amount of local solar installed in frontline communities	Measures GW of solar installed in low- and moderate-wealth and frontline communities, which will magnify clean energy benefits.	Indicates positive trend towards a more equitable transition to clean energy.
	1C. Percentage of customer electricity usage powered by solar	Measures share of energy needs supplied by solar, including rooftop and local solar. Captures the relationship between local solar generation and customer electricity usage.	Indicates the impact of rooftop and local solar in supplying energy needs.
2. Transform the energy system	2A. Amount of gas and other fossil fuel combustion replaced by renewable portfolios	Measures GW of fossil fuel combustion replaced by renewables, including Virtual Power Plants.	Indicates tangible emissions avoided due to incorporation of clean energy resources.
	2B. Amount of local solar solutions fully valued as an asset (as a percentage of a utility's overall resource portfolio)	Measures GW of local solar accounted for or procured in utility resource planning as a reliable energy sources as a percentage of the overall portfolio of resources. Also measures the number of utilities taking local solar resources into account as a result of Vote Solar's work.	Indicates positive shift in how utilities acknowledge the benefits that local solar solutions can bring to customers.
	2C. Number of utility resource plans that account for non-energy costs and benefits in approved procurement plans	Measures the number of utilities required to take equity and affordability into account as a result of Vote Solar advocacy.	Indicates our contribution to progress toward utility transparency and accountability.

Appendix B: Strategic Plan Metrics

Goal	Metric	Description	Significance of Increasing Metric
3. Increase the power of frontline communities to win	3A. Percent of VS campaigns with frontline community partners engaged	Measures how frequently Vote Solar is engaging frontline communities in campaigns and providing support to remove barriers to participation.	Indicates we are advancing inclusivity by consistently ensuring that frontline communities are supported to actively participate in Vote Solar campaigns.
	3B. Percent of VS campaigns where frontline community partners assume a leadership role	Measures the extent to which frontline communities are empowered to lead within campaigns. This demonstrates a deeper level of partnership where communities most affected by energy policies drive the direction and outcomes of campaigns.	Indicates that Vote Solar campaigns and coalitions have frontline partners in positions of influence and authority, promoting equity in leadership and decision-making.
	3C. Number of frontline partners who, with the support of Vote Solar, participate directly in a regulatory proceeding	Measures the impact of Vote Solar's efforts to build the technical capacity of frontline partners to actively engage in regulatory processes. This signifies progress in empowering frontline communities to directly advocate for their needs and perspectives within highly complex formal decision-making arenas.	Indicates successful capacity-building initiatives, where more frontline partner organizations are actively brought into complex regulatory proceedings, ensuring their perspectives are included where they have historically been ignored.

Appendix B: Strategic Plan Metrics

Goal	Metric	Description	Significance of Increasing Metric
4. Build awareness and support for an equitable transition	4A. Vote Solar's Share of Voice across social media, earned media, and search analysis	Measures Share of Voice to understand how effectively our message of an equitable clean energy transition is reaching and resonating with our target audiences and becoming a regular part of the conversation.	Indicates that Vote Solar is successfully amplifying its thought leadership and value proposition, positioning the organization as a key player in the national dialogue on clean energy and equity.
	4B. Placement and audiences of earned media coverage with emphasis on hyper-local news	Measures the quantity and reach of our media placements, as well as the effectiveness of our storytelling efforts. Increase emphasis on tracking hyper-local news outlets that are more likely to reach frontline communities.	Indicates extent to which our narrative is reaching and resonating with diverse communities, ultimately increasing the likelihood that these communities envision themselves in a clean energy future and become actively involved.
	4C. Number of advocacy actions taken	Measures advocacy actions (e.g., petition signatures, number of emails sent, contacts made with elected officials, and event participation) to indicate how our communications and advocacy efforts are translating into tangible actions by our supporters.	Indicates the effectiveness of our mobilization strategies to catalyze a more rapid energy transition.