

June 23rd, 2023

Hon. Michael Barrett
Chair, Joint Committee on
Telecommunications, Utilities & Energy
Massachusetts Senate

Hon. Jeffrey Roy
Chair, Joint Committee on
Telecommunications, Utilities & Energy
Massachusetts House

Re: Support for S.2150 and H.3225, to encourage solar development on built and disturbed land

Dear Chair Barrett, Chair Roy, and Members of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy:

We strongly support [H.3225](#) filed by Representative Sabadosa and Representative Garballey, and an identical bill, [S.2150](#) filed by Senator Mark, *An Act to Encourage Solar Development on Built and Disturbed Land*.

We are united in our belief that:

- As required by the Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy law, the Commonwealth must imminently and significantly increase construction of wind and solar energy generation.
- To the extent possible, siting solar development where it has the least environmental impact should be a priority. (Siting wind turbines to reduce environmental impacts is already a priority.)
- Locations that impose the ‘least environmental impact’ include buildings and lands already developed and disturbed by human activity. (Massachusetts has over 1 million acres of already developed land, including rooftops, parking lots, brownfields, and disturbed or degraded lands.)
- The Commonwealth must provide policy changes and further incentives to make solar development economically viable on buildings and disturbed lands because these locations are inherently more costly than on natural lands.

Both [H.3225](#) and [S.2150](#) embody the above beliefs. These bills will:

1. Encourage projects on the built and disturbed environment by providing these projects a 100% net metering rate.
2. Raise the project size limit for net metering from 2MWac to 5MWac for projects on the built and disturbed environment.
3. Remove net metering caps and incentive phase-outs for future solar projects on the built and disturbed environment. (This will encourage stable, year-after-year jobs in the solar industry. Massachusetts has a history of solar incentive programs that are time or capacity

limited. This “go-then-stop” nature of solar policies has not fostered development of a stable solar workforce.)

The bills direct additional, needed administrative changes by including incentives for the built and disturbed environment in the state’s SMART solar program, and any successor, and removing declining incentive blocks for solar facilities on built and disturbed land. They also increase needed flexibility, allowing the administration to adjust its adders based on changing market conditions, such as labor and material costs.

The incentives proposed by these bills are critical to achieve a widespread solar roll out that encourages solar development where we want it most and a stable workforce to carry it out. We ask that you give a favorable report to both bills.

If you have questions please contact Jess Nahigian, State Political Director, Sierra Club Massachusetts, jess.nahigian@sierraclub.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deb Pasternak
Sierra Club Massachusetts

Heidi Ricci
Mass Audubon

David Melly
Environmental League of Massachusetts

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Dorothy McGlincy
Massachusetts Assn. of Conservation Commissions

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Rev. Cindy Davidson
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Heather Clish
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