

From: noreply@noreply.mass.gov
To: [SitingBoard Filing \(DPU\)](#)
Subject: EFSB Permitting Reform Comment Form
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 1:15:51 PM

Name

Jessica Kraft

Email

[REDACTED]

I am a...

Member of the public

Are you commenting on a straw proposal?

Yes

If yes , which one?

Cumulative Impacts Analysis

Comment/Question

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed siting guidelines and evaluation criteria for battery energy storage systems (BESS), particularly as outlined in the "Cumulative Impacts Analysis" session and associated straw proposal.

As a member of Empower Brighton and Allston, a grassroots organization committed to safety and common-sense development, I urge you to consider the very real public health, fire safety, and environmental risks posed by these large-scale battery installations—especially when located near dense residential areas.

We've already seen examples, such as the proposed Electric Avenue site, that have raised significant alarm among residents due to their proximity to homes, schools, and public gathering areas. The potential consequences of thermal runaway events, chemical leaks, or fire emergencies in a high-density neighborhood are too severe to ignore. Please do your homework! Look at these incidents- look at the evacuations, look at the thermal runaway incidents, look at the size of the explosions and plumes of toxic smoke, and durations when you are thinking proximity to residents, look at the most recent examples such as miss landing BESS fires and follow up with the CA department of public health on their findings of surveys for health concerns. We must balance and weigh very carefully the risks of health and residents today with the cleaner energy promise for those in the future. There is a way to do both by ensuring technology is safe and tested and setbacks and size are taken seriously with extra precautions in place.

Regarding the straw proposal, I offer the following responses:

1. Are the proposed evaluation criteria appropriate?

NO. The current criteria do not go far enough to protect public safety or address the cumulative environmental and health impacts of BESS in urban areas.

2. Are there criteria that should be applied to certain types of infrastructure and not others?

YES. Immutable setbacks from residential property lines should be established and mandated for any BESS. These setbacks are critical to ensuring a buffer that can mitigate risk to human life and property in the event of a malfunction or emergency.

I encourage you to prioritize public health and safety in all siting decisions and adopt clear, enforceable standards that reflect the risks unique to battery energy storage systems. We must not wait for a preventable disaster to demonstrate the inadequacy of the current proposal.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jessica Kraft
Member, Empower Brighton and Allston