| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Lindsey Peterson |
| **To:** | SMART, DOER (ENE) |
| **Subject:** | 400 MW Review Public Comments |
| **Date:** | Friday, September 27, 2019 1:04:11 PM |

Dear DOER,

Thanks for seeking input to improve the SMART program. As you know, solar and other renewable energy development is so important now. At the same time, we need to prioritize the unique natural resource of Massachusetts' forests and incentivize forest preservation as part of a broad renewable energy plan for Massachusetts.

In specific, adjustments to the SMART program need to be made to increase incentives for rooftop solar on pre-existing and new construction. Disincentives need to be put in place so that developers are disinclined to clear cut forests for solar. Simultaneously, mechanisms which monetize the *preservation* of forests need to be made.

As someone living in rural Belchertown, I understand that large landowners are seeking ways to use their land for economic gain. Rather than incentivizing developers to link with these large landowners to clear cut forest for solar, the Massachusetts SMART program needs lay out a more creative plan which establishes economic possibilities such that preserving the forested land is rewarded more than clear cutting it is.

Developing solar (and wind) and preserving forests are simultaneous moves toward 100% renewable energy. Massachusetts is uniquely suited to protect and preserve forests, and forests are essential infrastructure in our statewide and nationwide efforts to transition rapidly off of a fossil fuel-based energy economy.

Thank you for your service on behalf of the common wealth.

Respectfully,

Rev. Lindsey Peterson
Belchertown, MA