From: Michael Hofler
To: SMART, DOER (ENE)
Subject: 400 mw review comment
Date: Friday, September 27, 2019 8:15:56 AM

As a (volunteer) Planning Board member of a small western Massachusetts community we get overwhelmed with multiple proposals from major companies all trying to stick solar fields on property that is inappropriate due to the slope of the hillside (erosion), proximity to drinking water sources, extensive cutting of heavily forested areas, or other issues.

The financial incentives to build and the burden on the small western towns are out of balance.

I would suggest:

1. Codify the PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) into law so that it cannot be challenged in tax court.
2. Allow a multiplier onto the PILOT calculation (above existing local tax rate) to reflect the quality-of-life burden created when tourist attracting landscape is converted to seas of blue panels.
3. We already ask for pollinator habitat. I like the UMASS Amherst certification approach. This requirement should be a state design standard without paying anyone anything!
4. Create an independent regional engineering review entity that small towns could use to have a third-party review of the impact to ground / surface water, large animal migration, impact on tourism dollars, and all the other aspects that make living in western Massachusetts so wonderful.

Thank you,

Mike Hofler