IAC Electricity Working Group Top Six Policy Priorities for the 2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plan

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Over the summer of 2020, the Electricity Working Group developed a robust list of potential policy priorities from our 2019 Policy Recommendations, input from the Climate Justice Working Group, and emerging issues in the sector. In early September 2020 we narrowed that list to six top Policy Priorities for the Electricity Sector in the 2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plan.

Before sharing our top six Priorities, we will note a few foundational concepts and policies that undergird our specific top six Policy Priorities. These include the establishment or reinforcement of consistent accounting methods for greenhouse gas emissions across the Northeast region in order to prevent double counting; the political will and motivation to ensure adequate supply of large scale non-emitting generation resources through transformation of ISO-NE markets to adequately value and incentivize the development of non-emitting generation technologies, adjustments to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and further state-backed procurements of sufficient generation to meet demand from electrification of buildings and transportation sector end uses; and the Commonwealth's active participation in ensuring that markets and planning at ISO-NE account for benefits and burdens on Environmental Justice populations.

1. **EEA will support EJ populations in accessing the benefits of renewable energy generation** by developing customer-facing programs (in addition to bolstering existing programs like the MA Solar Loan and Heat Smart) to remove financial barriers to access for environmental justice communities and low and moderate income electric customers, by mandating a minimum percentage of participants in customer-facing clean energy programs from environmental justice communities and low and moderate income electric customer categories, and by creating and enhancing incentives and regulatory carve-outs to encourage development of community shared distributed energy resources and microgrids in environmental justice communities. [From CJWG Recs for EWG Policy #2&4]

2. **EEA will adopt a definition of the Social Cost of Carbon accounting for the impact of GHG pollution** on agriculture and other land uses, public health, and property, and use it to conduct benefit cost analysis for electric sector regulations and new proposed electric generation facilities. [From CJWG Rec for EWG Policy #2]

3. **EEA will push ISO-NE and the other 5 states to commit to region-wide decarbonization planning**, building upon the MA Pathways study. [From EWG Policy #5]

4. **EEA will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the resilience of the EDC transmission and distribution system** in extreme heating demand conditions, assuming high electrification and advanced utilization of active demand management, and will then sequence the upgrades and enabling technology needed to meet those assumptions and begin implementation of those changes. As part of implementation, the DPU should ensure that low- and moderate-income customers are able to benefit from grid modernization and do not see their energy costs rise as a result of any necessary capital investments. [From EWG Policy #4 and CJWG Rec for EWG Policy #4]

5. **EEA will remove biomass and municipal solid waste combustion ("waste-to-energy") from eligibility under all clean energy incentive programs** administered by EEA, including the RPS,

APS, CES, and CPS, by 2022, and will conduct a strategic review of the impact of said clean energy incentive programs on the Commonwealth's ability to meet the 2050 net zero requirement of clean energy incentive programs by 2028 to guide further adjustments to program eligibility. [From EWG Policy #2]

6. **EEA will address the localized public health impacts of other air pollutants (PM2.5, ozone, NOx, etc.) that co-occur with GHG emissions from combustion** by conducting consistent and routine reviews of the geographic location of GHG emissions tracked under MA's carbon accounting system for the electric sector, and using said reviews to compare impacts in EJ communities relative to non-EJ communities to inform policy implementation. [From CJWG Rec for EWG Policy #1]