

MA Solar Carve-Out -- Chapter 75 of the Acts of 2016: [“An Act Relative to Solar Energy”](#)

CivicSolar supports a comprehensive reform of the MA Solar Carve-Out program that appropriately incentivizes and encourages the continued and sustainable development of solar energy resources in Massachusetts.

CivicSolar supports a new policy to replace the existing SREC market structure that includes a comprehensive valuation of solar energy resources that reflects not only the full generation, transmission and distribution value of solar as a distributed, clean energy resource, but also the various positive externalities that solar energy creates for the communities, environment and economy of Massachusetts. A similar effort to comprehensively value solar is currently underway in New York State’s REV proposal to value solar based on the “LMP+D+E model”, which stands for Locational Marginal Pricing + Distributed + Externalities and external social value. Massachusetts and the DOER should quickly begin a similar process to ensure that thousands of good solar jobs are not lost in the Commonwealth and that Massachusetts once again becomes a national leader in clean energy development and a greener, lower-carbon built environment.

Based on this position, CivicSolar supports and encourages the DOER to follow many of the “Net Metering and Solar Task Force’s” key recommendations, most importantly to conduct a comprehensive and transparent solar benefit/cost study to determine the value and impact of solar in Massachusetts as well as a Value of Solar study to evaluate system benefits, including avoided system costs, and societal benefits. Such a valuation of solar should have a particular emphasis on the energy consumed by the built environment and can utilize various energy modeling tools to encourage and appropriately incentivize the deployment of solar resources in locations and service areas where it will provide the greatest benefits to the grid and the communities it serves. A comprehensive valuation of solar would restart the solar industry in Massachusetts that is currently hanging in the balance from legislative and regulatory uncertainty. These reforms would not only spur significantly more solar photovoltaic installations, but also the development of a clean energy storage market -- the next frontier in the more secure, efficient, and responsive clean energy electricity infrastructure of the future.

CivicSolar supports new policies that will not only more appropriately value solar, but will also make solar energy more accessible, inclusive, and equitable by encouraging cooperatively owned solar, virtual net metering, community solar, municipal solar, and solar for low-income communities in Massachusetts. Clearer policies and a better valuation of solar will allow for this, along with targeted reforms and programs to increase access to financing and lowering some of the upfront costs of these types of projects with particular social impact.

A comprehensive reform of the MA Solar Carve-Out and SREC market structure that analyzes and values solar energy closer to its full social, environmental, and economic value will be an important step towards a more sustainable, democratic, distributed energy economy in Massachusetts. Such reforms will create and maintain thousands of good clean energy-related jobs in many different industries, increase the amount of electricity generated in Massachusetts from clean energy sources, and work towards the Commonwealth’s goals of greater energy security with lower carbon emissions.