

May 21, 2020

Patrick C. Woodcock, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1020
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Commissioner Woodcock:

I am writing comments relative to the Commonwealth's Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program and 225 CMR 20.00 emergency regulations.

First, we I like to remark that I commend the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for its work promoting renewable energy throughout the Commonwealth. As a resident of Cape Cod, I appreciate the Department's efforts to increase the SMART program in order for the Commonwealth to reach its carbon emissions goals. A healthy sustainable environment is vital to the Cape's economy and way of life.

I am concerned however that the proposed regulations as written could have an unintended negative consequence for both the Cape's environment and economy. In particular solar development would be significantly hampered throughout Cape Cod and other areas of the Commonwealth.

The proposed provision in the SMART regulations would cut significantly into the amount of usable land for solar development, in particular ground-mounted solar projects. The provision will hinder solar development and investment into the Cape Cod community. The Commonwealth has been a leader in the solar field which has been a driving force towards reaching our carbon emissions goals. Additionally ground-mounted solar has been an economic boom for our communities – creating jobs, energy savings, and tax revenue.

It is also my understanding that other forms of developments such as residential housing and commercial would still be allowed under these regulations as solar ground-mountain development would be prohibited.

I agree that conservation considerations need to be a part of new SMART regulations, but there needs to be balance between conservation goals and economic and environmental considerations. I believe the reduction of the scale of rural and agricultural land available for solar development does more harm than good for the Commonwealth and request that the Department re-evaluate this provision.

At this time Cape Cod cannot afford such limits on programs that put people to work, generate tax revenue – COVID 19 has ravaged the Cape's seasonal and hospitality economy and we can't sustain another blow that this provision could inflict. A recent report outlined how the pandemic has already been detrimental to the solar industry with recent reports suggesting that we have lost

over 4,000 jobs here in Massachusetts alone. I fear that if the provision is not addressed that the number of jobs lost will surely grow.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to working with you on the successful expansion of SMART.

Sincerely,

James Dever

Jim Dever

Sandwich

Democratic Candidate for State Representative 5th Barnstable District