



COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF
CLIMATE ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
RESOURCES**

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Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll
Lt. Governor

Robert J. Tepper
Secretary

John J. Mahony
Commissioner

June 30, 2025
BY EMAIL

Chair Michael J. Barrett
Senate Committee on
Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
Room 312-B

Chair Mark J. Cusack
House Committee on
Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
Room 43

Chair Cynthia Stone Creem
Senate Committee on Climate Change and
Global Warming
Room 312-A

Chair Tram Nguyen
House Committee on Climate Action and
Sustainability
Room 36

Office of the Clerk of the House
Honorable Steven T. James, Clerk
Room 145

Office of the Clerk of the Senate
Honorable Michael D. Hurley
Room 335

Dear Honorable Clerks and Chairs:

Section 124 - *An Act promoting a clean energy grid, advancing equity and protecting ratepayers* directed the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to convene a working group to "develop recommendations for regulatory and legislative changes that may be necessary to encourage the construction and operation of solar power generating canopies."

The statute directed the working group to convene by the end of March 2025 and submit a report to the Committee and the Senate and House clerks by the end of June 2025. The working group is nearing completion of its work, having made substantial progress. To ensure all critical perspectives are reflected—particularly

those requested by members of the legislature, the working group plans to file a supplementary report at a later date.

I offer this reporting of the working group's efforts to date and a timeline for supplementary report submittal. As instructed by the legislation, the group is chaired by my designee, Deputy Director Cobi Frongillo, and comprised of:

- a representative of the commercial real estate sector, Matthew Connolly of Nutter;
- a representative of the residential real estate sector, Sonia Patano of GID;
- a representative of the organized labor industry, Kevin Brousseau of AFL-CIO;
- a representative of the solar energy industry, Valessa Souter-Kline of the Solar Energy Industries Association;
- a representative of an environmental group, Amy Boyd Rabin of the Environmental League of Massachusetts;
- a representative of the construction industry, Gregory Beeman of the Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts;
- a representative of an electric utility, Brian Rice of Eversource Energy;
- a representative of local government, Mike Ossing of the Massachusetts Municipal Association;
- an expert in energy siting, Jessica Robertson of New Leaf, and
- an expert in solar and energy efficiency, Heather Takle of PowerOptions.

The working group held its kickoff meeting on March 28th and has subsequently held four public meetings on the following dates: April 18, April 25, May 9, and June 5 in a hybrid format. In the meetings, the working group heard directly from experienced solar canopy developers, representatives from municipalities with public solar canopy projects, climate and land use advocates, and regulatory officials. The working group continues to refine and deliberate on draft recommendations. See complete meeting materials and minutes at: mass.gov/info-details/solar-canopy-working-group.

Additionally, Deputy Director Frongillo met or otherwise corresponded with additional stakeholders to collect input from the broadest set of stakeholders despite the compact timeline set in statute, including Senator Joanne Comerford and Representative Natalie Blais, sponsors of the original legislative language; researchers from Yale University; representatives of Elders Climate Action and Climate Action Now; Directors of the DOER Green Communities and Clean Energy Siting & Permitting Divisions; and staff from University of Massachusetts facilities, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and the Franklin Regional County of Governments. The findings of such conversations have been reported to working members and, where appropriate, incorporated into the recommendations. The working group also benefitted from economic analysis and research conducted by DOER over the past two years as we developed our new SMART (solar incentive) program.

The working group examined the financing, siting and other challenges facing the construction of solar canopies, as the supplemental report will explain. The group finds that the latest SMART regulations, as currently written, substantially address the largest barriers to cost-effective solar canopy development and deployment in the Commonwealth by improving the eligibility, flexibility, and relative compensation of canopy projects. Further policy and program recommendations cover three main categories: financial assistance, permitting & interconnection improvements, and additional supports.

DOER, on behalf of the working group, intends to submit the supplemental report later this summer. In the meantime, please reach out to Deputy Director Frongillo (Cobi.Frongillo@mass.gov) with any further inquiries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth Mahony". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Elizabeth Mahony
Commissioner