

FROM: H. Laurie Degnan – Former Chair of Solar Committee and volunteer of “SHARE THE BURDEN”.
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RE: “LDES Study Comments”

To: Grid@masscec.com and Aurora.Edington@mass.gov

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Bottom line up front: **All 351 cities and towns should have sufficient solar sites and/or battery storage systems to handle the energy needs within their towns. Effectively sharing the burden across the entire state and not just on the backs of a handful of rural towns.** Central Massachusetts, followed by western Massachusetts has hosted the majority of large scale, ground mounted solar photovoltaic installations in the state. We have enabled the statehouse and DOER of Massachusetts to reach lofty renewable energy goals since we have cheaper, large tracts of land near phase 3 power with sufficient existing substation capacity. Charlton has done their duty by currently hosting more 26 large scale solar farms producing more than 65 MW of solar (plus batteries) and more in the planning stage. We currently produce more than twice the MW for our 4,427 homes! These are actually sited in Charlton and not merely a municipality claiming to be green by purchasing virtual energy from solar.

#1 - I would like the committee to give greater financial assistance to suburban towns and cities that do not have large land tracts available to host large scale solar – to now do their part and host battery storage systems instead! I understand the DOER can reach storage goals and zero carbon goals much quicker by siting these hundred MW battery storage sites. Since siting smaller MW battery sites could cost developers more due to land values, financial assistance could help keep the energy closer to where it is needed most! **Since 1 MW of battery storage needs only 1,000 square feet of space, and is considered safe by the industry– there should be no reason all Massachusetts towns cannot do their part to achieve the zero carbon goals of Massachusetts.** Having all towns that cannot host ground mounted solar or wind, host sufficient MW of battery storage to power their own requirements. Therefore enabling ALL towns do their part in hosting renewable energy.

#2 – Expanding your panel of consultants instead of just the lobbyists and green energy companies employees. Have an independent industry expert give advice on the health and safety of batteries. Again, the DOER seems to merely care about the fastest, largest, cheapest way to reach the states goals without consideration of Massachusetts residents. Someone local, like WPI professor and fire expert Milosh Puchovsky could represent residents.

Charlton has been proactive in welcoming and zoning for solar and batteries. We now say “UNCLE” and hope that you push some renewable energy responsibility towards the heavily populated areas that use the most power. BESS systems are the answer to every resident sharing the burden of hosting.

I hope that you prevent the large development solar and/or batteries from continued bullying of our small towns. **The developers follow the money so consider only incentivizing inside route 495 only allowing many smaller, battery storage sites throughout all cities and towns.**

Thank you,
H. Laurie Degnan