



January 15, 2024

The Honorable Robert F. Matzie  
Chairman  
House Consumer Protection, Technology  
& Utilities  
P.O. Box 202016  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2016

The Honorable Jim Marshall  
Chairman  
House Consumer Protection, Technology  
& Utilities  
P.O. Box 202014  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2014

**RE: SEIA Support for House Bill 1842 – Community Solar**

Dear Chairs:

I am writing on behalf of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) in **support** of House Bill 1842 (Schweyer-D), which provides for community solar facilities; imposing duties on the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, electric distribution companies and subscriber organizations; and providing for prevailing wage for construction of community solar facilities. It was re-referred to the House Consumer Protection, Technology & Utilities Committee on November 13, 2023.

SEIA is the national trade association for the United States solar industry. With more than 1,000 member companies nationwide, SEIA is leading the transformation to a clean energy economy, creating the framework for solar to constitute 20% of U.S. electricity generation by 2030. SEIA works with its member companies and other strategic partners to shape fair market rules that promote competition and the growth of reliable, low-cost solar power. SEIA has more than thirty member companies located in Pennsylvania with many more national firms also conducting business in the state. Member companies range from manufacturers; residential, community, and utility-scale solar developers; installers; construction firms; investment firms; and service providers.

It is critical that Pennsylvania maximize the economic and business opportunities associated with all electric power generation sources. To that end, SEIA supports policy measures that will drive needed investment in clean, domestic, local job-producing solar generation. Bringing community solar to Pennsylvania is a good first step in embracing the business potential of solar energy across the Commonwealth.

Community solar projects are small, local solar facilities shared by multiple community subscribers who receive credit on their electricity bills for their share of the power produced. Community solar can expand solar accessibility and make sure all Pennsylvanians have the choice to experience the cost-saving benefits of solar energy without needing to install a solar system where they reside.

In addition, like all solar, community solar can help family farms stay in the family and counteract the ongoing trend of farms being lost due to economic hardships. For example, leasing small, unused, or underutilized portions of land to community solar organizations allows landowners to earn a steady revenue stream from solar lease payments that help mitigate market volatility and severe weather events like droughts. At a time when many agricultural producers are struggling, solar can create additional revenue streams and help support farmer incomes.

Therefore, community solar can unlock economic activity in Pennsylvania at a time when the Commonwealth needs more jobs and private investment. Solar can and should be a major economic driver in the Commonwealth.

SEIA appreciates the willingness of the chairs and prime sponsor to consider removing the decommissioning language contained in House Bill 1842, as more comprehensive decommissioning legislation, Senate Bill 211, awaits action by the House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee. With this change, SEIA is more comfortable supporting this legislation moving forward. Moreover, SEIA stands ready to work with the committee and stakeholders on any additional revisions deemed necessary to House Bill 1842 in order to move this important legislation forward.

Finally, encouraging more solar development in Pennsylvania is not a decommitment to thermal and other forms of energy that the Commonwealth has so proudly produced for decades. Solar energy is a compliment to the state's energy portfolio and strengthens it for future generations. It will ensure continued regional demand and that Pennsylvania maintains its status as a net energy exporter, while providing energy security through a diverse energy portfolio to help support reliability of the electric grid now and in the future amid increasingly extreme weather as Pennsylvania experienced during Winter Storm Elliot.

While much more is needed to grow this domestic energy source here in Pennsylvania, House Bill 1842 can begin to capture the vast untapped potential of solar to drive real, on-the-ground economic benefit and opportunity to all communities across the Commonwealth. It will also give Pennsylvania residents and business owners the opportunity and choice to benefit from community solar projects.

Thank you for your consideration. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Leah Meredith*

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Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA)  
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