

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon
Chair, House Committee on Corporations
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: *SUPPORT for Community Solar Legislation - House Bill No. 5327 by Potter, Baginski, Felix, Batista, Ruggiero, Speakman, Knight, Kislak, Shallcross Smith, Fogarty*

To Chairman Solomon:

Please consider this written testimony in support of community solar legislation that would take an important step forward for Community Solar in Rhode Island.

TurningPoint Energy (TPE) is a national solar development and advisory company, based in Colorado that specializes in community scale solar. I run our Rhode Island office and live in Charlestown. We started investing in Rhode Island in 2016 as part of the initial Community Solar Pilot Program and wish to continue investing in Rhode Island but need your help to do so. We have 2 community solar projects wrapping up construction which collectively created more than 150 jobs while contributing to the local economy through tax payments and energy savings to Rhode Island residents. However, the Pilot program passed by the General Assembly is now full.

An expansion is critical to our business, as these projects take multiple years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to develop. TPE needs some level of certainty to continue our investment as a responsible business. Action now by the General Assembly would help prevent a boom and bust cycle for renewable energy. At 60 MW, the proposed expansion is moderate compared to neighboring states such as Massachusetts (1500 MW), New York (2000MW), Connecticut (175MW) and Maine (uncapped).

The primary purpose of community solar, is to allow members of a community the opportunity to save money on their electric bills from local clean energy even if they cannot install solar panels on their property. This bill goes beyond a mere expansion by combining best practices from other markets with input from various stakeholders as follows.

- The 20% minimum LMI carve out will enable equitable access to clean energy.
- Directing a portion of the program to previously disturbed sites and capping overall project size were in response to concerns raised by environmental organizations.
- Project maturity requirements will increase the speed at which projects are constructed and made available to Rhode Island residents.

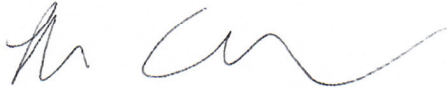
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- Project compensation was reduced through the allocation of capacity credits to National grid for the benefit of ratepayers.

As Rhode Island continues to move forward toward its clean energy goals by 2020 and beyond, we believe that this legislation is a critical step in that it will allow all Rhode Islanders – whether renter or owner, whether rich or poor – to be a part of our clean energy future.

Thank you in advance for considering this important proposal to continue Rhode Island's path towards a renewable energy future. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide any additional information to your committee.

Sincerely Yours,



Michelle Carpenter
Managing Director of Development
TurningPoint Energy

cc: Representative William W. O'Brien, First Vice Chair
Representative Justine A. Caldwell, Second Vice Chair
Representative Stephen M. Casey
Representative Michael W. Chippendale
Representative Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung Member
Representative Bernard A. Hawkins Member
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