



For Immediate Release
December 19, 2019

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Rooftop & Shared Solar Industry, Advocates Endorse Virginia Clean Economy Act

RICHMOND, VA – A diverse coalition of Virginia solar companies, advocacy groups, ratepayer advocates and constituents invested in the increased deployment of rooftop and shared solar announced Thursday their strong support for the Virginia Clean Economy Act carried by Senator Jennifer McClellan and Delegates Rip Sullivan, Jennifer Carroll-Foy, and Alfonso Lopez.

The Virginia Clean Economy Act is an ambitious reform of Virginia’s energy economy, establishing clear requirements for renewable and clean energy production. The legislation requires all power produced in Virginia be 100% renewable and carbon-free by 2050, establishes energy efficiency standards, and commits Virginia to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

The legislation would also dramatically expand access to “distributed generation solar” – rooftop and shared solar that is built on site and remotely and used to directly power homes, businesses, and organizations – by establishing a distributed generation RPS carve out, including minimum low-to-moderate income participant requirements, to financially encourage DG investment, by raising the cap on net metering from one percent to 10 percent, increasing limits on the size of commercial and industrial solar projects to 3MW, and making legal third-party owned power-purchase agreements statewide.

“Rooftop and shared solar projects are the backbone of Virginia’s clean energy future, responsible for roughly 64 percent of solar jobs,” said Karla Loeb, Chair of the Distributed Generation Policy Committee for the Maryland Delaware Virginia Solar Energy Industries Association and Chief Policy & Development Officer for Sigora Solar. “This legislation expands access to the most equitable form of renewable energy on the market today, available directly to consumers and users. If you have solar panels on your home or business, or have ever thought about it, this legislation will make it more accessible and affordable than ever before.”

“Virginia cannot meet the clean energy standards laid out in the Virginia Clean Economy Act without a robust and thriving solar market that provides families and small businesses with direct access to solar,” said Rachel Smucker, the Virginia Policy and Development Manager for MDV-SEIA. “The entire distributed solar generation industry is committed to helping the General Assembly pass, and the Governor sign, this legislation.”

“We are excited to support the Virginia Clean Economy Act and the opportunity for shared solar to offer every Virginian access to affordable, local clean energy,” said Leslie Elder of the Coalition for Community Solar Access.

“We’re ready for Virginia to stake its claim as a climate leader by codifying its commitment to 100% clean energy,” said Thad Culley, Regional Director at Vote Solar. “The tangible impacts of this legislation will mean more steel in the ground, more savings for Virginia families and a booming local solar economy.”

Future updates and information can be found at www.virginiasolarforall.com.

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