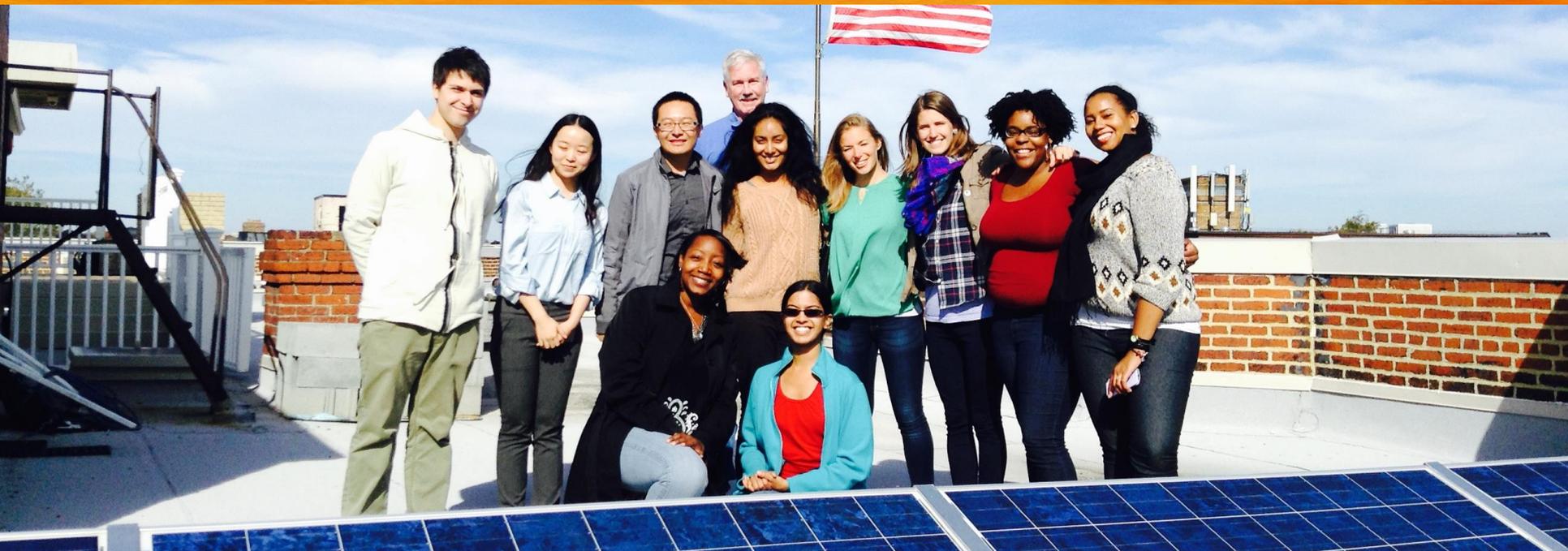




Impactful Citizen Lobbying

PA Solar Congress

February 24, 2019



Our Theory of Change



The role of citizen lobbyists in shaping policy

People who have a stake in the clean energy economy are highly motivated and compelling advocates for clean energy policies.



Strengthening the voices of solar homeowners



Bringing solar homeowners' *unique perspective* to lobby for pro-solar policies is a key part of our mission.

Citizen Lobbying

- **What is Lobbying?**
 - getting what you want by advocating to the people with the power to give it to you.
- **Does grassroots lobbying work?**
 - **YES!**



How does a bill become law?

- ✓ A bill = proposed law
- ✓ Assigned to committee which holds public hearings before voting on bill.
- ✓ If bill passes through committee, it goes to the full legislative body for votes.
- ✓ If approved, bill is sent to the Governor to sign.
- ✓ If the Governor vetoes, legislators can vote again to override the veto.



Levels of citizen lobbying



Before Contacting Your Representatives

- ✓ Learn about their background, and solar and energy voting record (ask us).
- ✓ Prepare what you want to say, starting with your personal story about how the bill solves a problem or impacts your family, community, or business.
- ✓ Remember that your story will make a greater impact than presenting facts about the bill.

Tips when mailing or calling your representatives

- ✓ **Address them by their proper title**
 - ✓ **Representative Smith**
- ✓ **Identify yourself by:**
 - ✓ **Name, Town, Profession and, if relevant to the issue, Organizational affiliation**
- ✓ **Identify the bill by number and title**

Citizen Lobbying

- ✓ **State how you would like your rep. to vote**
 - ✓ Explain how the bill would affect you, your family, business, and/or community.
- ✓ **If the representative opposes**
 - ✓ Express disappointment
 - ✓ Ask what info/questions they need to reconsider position and follow up ASAP with info (ask us for help)
- ✓ **If representative supports**
 - ✓ Express gratitude and ask to co-sponsor bill and urge colleagues to support

More Tips

- ✓ Be politely assertive and use a professional tone. Try not to express anger or threaten.
- ✓ One of the goals of communicating is to build an ongoing and productive constituent-representative relationship.

Lobbying in Person

- ✓ Meeting in person with your representative is usually the most impactful way to lobby.
- ✓ Request meeting (at least one week ahead) at their legislative office or in district.
- ✓ If your legislator is not available, ask to meet with a staffer/legislative aide.

Preparing for the meeting

- ✓ To prepare, see previous suggestions for calling/emailing your representatives.
- ✓ Good idea to have a one-page talking points.
- ✓ Don't bring a lot of written material to leave with the legislators; if you do, it should be no more than 1-2 pages.

During the Meeting

- ✓ Allow opportunities for legislators to speak about their positions and concerns.
- ✓ Take brief notes as long as it's not distracting.
- ✓ If you don't know the answer to a question...
 - ✓ Say so, and offer to find the answer and provide it to the legislator later. (Ask us for help)
- ✓ Close meeting by thanking for the opportunity and say that you will send a follow-up email.

If your representative disagrees...

- ✓ Calmly express your disappointment and ask what kind of information would be needed for them to reconsider. Offer to send more information via email.
- ✓ Solar United Neighbors can assist you in obtaining this information.

After the meeting...

- ✓ Review/clarify your meeting notes
- ✓ Send follow-up email thanking them for the meeting
 - ✓ Include any requested info
 - ✓ Repeat your ask to support your position
- ✓ If your legislators say they will support
 - ✓ Thank them, ask them to co-sponsor bill, and urge them to encourage their colleagues to follow suit.

Writing/Giving Testimony to Committee

- ✓ Email testimony (1-2 pages) to the committee clerk, asking that your testimony be distributed to committee members.
- ✓ Tell your personal story! The more specific, the better.
- ✓ Oral testimony is usually restricted to 2-3 minutes
- ✓ Bring enough copies of your written testimony to pass out to committee members just before you speak

Writing Letters to the Editor (LTE)

- ✓ Before you write your LTE, check the newspaper's word count guidelines (usually around 150 words)
- ✓ Identify the bill, explain why it's important to you and your community, and call on your local legislators by name to support your position
- ✓ It can also be helpful to tie your letter to an article the newspaper previously published

What's happening in Pennsylvania this year?

- **Community Solar – HB 531**
 - Status: waiting to be sent to committee
 - Strategies: target committee chair, get more co-sponsors, especially Republicans from Western PA, engage ag community
- **Updating the AEPS - ???**
 - Status: no bill yet, but our AEPS expires in 2021, solar industry will stall out if we don't update it soon
 - Strategies: make sure all state legislators feel pressure to set ambitious AEPS goals with a >8% solar carve-out
- **Nuclear bailout - ???**
 - Status: bill being drafted, may add nuclear to the AEPS
 - Strategies: make sure that whatever deal is reached, it protects ratepayers and does not undercut solar

Next steps

- ✓ Let us know if you need help connecting with your representatives (meeting, testimony, etc.)
- ✓ Look for forthcoming resources, including this slide presentation and a Citizen Lobbying Guide
- ✓ For help, email PAteam@solarunitedneighbors.org



**Learn more at
solarunitedneighbors.org**

Thank You!