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Solar United Neighbors Hails Passage of Community Solar Legislation in House Committee

The bill would allow more Pennsylvanians to benefit from solar energy than ever before

Harrisburg, PA—Community solar offers the benefits of solar energy to those who can't, or prefer not to, install panels on the roof of their residence. House Bill 1842 could bring community solar to Pennsylvania for the first time, and lawmakers have just signaled their support for the bill. The House Consumer Protection, Technology & Utilities committee voted unanimously on Tuesday to move the bill to the House floor for further consideration.

Community solar breaks down the barriers that many people face when trying to access solar energy. The program would allow Pennsylvanians who don't own their homes or can't finance solar, or who have unsuitable roofs, to purchase a "share" in a nearby solar installation. They would then earn a credit on their electric bill each month based on the size of their share. Savings are guaranteed.

"HB 1842 is a win for everyone," said Don Umberger, a resident of Hershey. "It would allow folks like me to participate in solar, despite the large trees that shade my house. Community solar creates good, well-paying jobs for Pennsylvanians, and it brings more clean energy to our state. I encourage the House and Senate to pass it quickly, so we can all enjoy the benefits of solar as soon as possible."

The nonprofit Solar United Neighbors (SUN) praised legislators for ensuring the benefits of community solar reach low-and-moderate income subscribers. SUN advocates for defining low-income to include residents whose income is 200% of the Federal Poverty Level to ensure equity in access to renewable energy.

"This is an exciting, long overdue step forward for energy policy in Pennsylvania," said Monica Carey, Pennsylvania program director for SUN. "Not only would this bill make solar energy more accessible for people throughout the state, it would create jobs and diversify our energy sources in the process."

Nearly half of states in the U.S. allow community solar, and many more are actively considering it. House Bill 1842 could make Pennsylvania the next state to pass this innovative solar policy. The bill will now move to the floor of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to be voted on by the full chamber. Once



it passes out of the Senate, the bill will be sent to Governor Shapiro’s desk to be signed into law. This process must happen before the end of 2024, at which point this legislative session ends and the bill dies and must begin again in the next session.

The vote supporting HB 1842 comes one week after Governor Shapiro [announced](#) his proposal for the Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standard (PRESS). PRESS is an alternative to the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards (AEPS), which increased electric generation by renewable energy sources. AEPS update bills in the General Assembly include a community solar carve-out, meaning 2% of the electricity sold in Pennsylvania must come from community solar projects. Details of the PRESS proposal are forthcoming, so it remains to be seen whether Governor Shapiro’s proposed program will prioritize community solar programs as enabled in House Bill 1842.

HB 1842 bill levels the playing field for all energy consumers and would benefit people in every region of Pennsylvania. SUN has more than 22,500 members across Pennsylvania, showing the desire for community solar stretches across the commonwealth.

“Everyone deserves to be able to choose what’s right for them when it comes to their electricity,” Carey said. “Community solar would make that choice more real for people across Pennsylvania, while helping them save money.”

ABOUT SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS

Solar United Neighbors is a nonprofit organization that works in Appalachia and nationwide to represent the needs and interests of solar owners and supporters. SUN has a mission to create a new energy system with rooftop solar at the cornerstone. Solar United Neighbors holds events and education programs to help people become informed solar consumers, maximize the value of their solar investment, and advocate for fair solar policies.

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