



May 12, 2018

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York strongly supports the passage of the VDER Moratorium bill A.10474/S.8273

Founded in 1983, the Northeast Organic Farming Association – New York (NOFA-NY) is the premier statewide organization growing a strong organic and sustainable agriculture movement in New York State. NOFA-NY provides education and assistance to local organic and sustainable farmers; connects consumers with organic and sustainable farmers; advocates policies that support a sustainable food and farm system at both the state and federal levels; and is the largest USDA-accredited organic certifier in New York certifying over 1,000 organic operations in the state.

A.10474/S.8273 — VDER Moratorium

Amends the public service law to restore net energy metering for community solar and directs the Public Service Commission and the Long Island Power Authority to create a methodology to compensate customers for the full and accurate value of their energy generation by 2021.

Summary of Legislation

This bill places a three-year moratorium on the Public Service Commission's (PSC) complicated and unworkable solar compensation policy, which is hurting community solar development across New York. In doing so, it raises the cap on the number of projects that can receive a simpler net metering value and requires utilities to compensate customer-generators (including community solar participants) with that value for the life of their systems. The bill directs the PSC to replace net metering by June 30, 2021 with a Value of Distributed Energy Resources (VDER) crediting mechanism that is simple and predictable and that fully and accurately accounts for the public benefits of renewable energy. For public accountability, the bill requires the PSC to provide an expanded public comment period and public hearings for its proposed methodology.

Statement in Support

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) strongly supports the passage of the VDER Moratorium bill. This bill will make solar energy and its benefits more accessible to residents and businesses who cannot put solar on their own roofs. The bill will reverse the harm created by the current VDER policy and improve the process for the replacement of net metering and ensure the new VDER policy accounts for all of the benefits to the environment and local communities that community solar provides.

- **This bill will fix a problem in the solar energy market created by the Public Service Commission.** After years of growth in New York’s solar industry, the corporate power utilities have erected a major barrier to solar in the form of the VDER regulation passed by the PSC last year. VDER hurts our NYS solar installers and blocks residents and businesses from the community solar opportunities that would otherwise be more abundant today.
- **Community solar can provide universal access to solar energy.** Many residents and businesses cannot install solar energy on their own roofs and so are locked out of the utility bill savings that solar customers enjoy. This is unjust. All utility customers pay for New York’s solar incentives, but not all businesses or residents can benefit from those incentives. We believe all New Yorkers should have the opportunity to invest in renewable energy.
- **Solar energy is socially, economically, and environmentally valuable.** The bill ensures that customers who switch to solar will be fairly compensated for their participation in making our communities more livable through reduced air and water pollution, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced energy bills, and the creation of local jobs.

Signed,

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