



NEW YORK SOLAR

Powering New York's Economy

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Press Release: NY Solar Bill Close to Becoming Law After Hurricane Sandy Exposes Weak Power Grid

Tuesday, 04 June, 2013 0

Policy Would Build Enough Reliable Solar to Power 400,000 Homes, Create Thousands of Local Jobs, Modernize NY Grid

Business, Environmental Groups Urge Passage of Landmark Solar Bill

Albany, NY – June 4, 2013 – Legislation to solidify New York's solar leadership was successfully reported out of the Assembly Energy Committee late last week. Solar has gained increasing attention from state lawmakers following the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy, which exposed New York's energy infrastructure as grossly outdated and unable to weather the effects of climate change.

The New York Solar Bill will create thousands of jobs, lower solar costs and increase energy reliability for all New Yorkers. It would enact the 10-year solar program proposed by Governor Cuomo earlier this year. A version of the bill unanimously passed the Senate on Earth Day. The bill is gaining momentum in the Assembly. With just 16 days remaining in the 2013 legislative session, the bill now awaits action by the Ways & Means Committee to enable an Assembly floor vote.

Business and environmental groups converged at the Capitol today to applaud the bill's champions and urge lawmakers to deliver landmark solar policy to Governor Cuomo's desk this legislative session.

"This bill will serve to expand upon access to a clean, renewable energy source that must be part of the conversation regarding the energy future of our state and nation," said **bill sponsor Assemblyman Steven Englebright (D-Setauket)**. "I applaud Governor Cuomo and Assemblywoman Paulin for taking the lead on this issue and urge my colleagues in the Senate to join us in ensuring that New York's energy future is on a sustainable track."

"When I was appointed chair of the Assembly Energy Committee earlier this year I made it a priority to increase the use of renewable energy resources and ease our dependence on fossil fuels. Part of this effort is to make it cost effective for individuals and businesses to use solar power. This bill provides the necessary incentives to help get New York on a path to producing and consuming more solar energy," said **Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (D-Westchester)**.

A poll conducted for the non-profit organization Vote Solar showed that an overwhelming 89% of New York voters support increasing the use of solar to meet the state's power needs. Over the past two weeks alone, nearly 10,000 New Yorkers have sent messages urging elected officials in

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"NY-Sun was carefully designed to make sure New York energy consumers get more solar bang for their buck. This investment will leverage another millions more in private capital to help New Yorkers harness the sun - a reliable, free, local fuel source that delivers power when and where it's needed most," said **Peter Olmsted, east coast policy advocate for the non-profit group Vote Solar**.


 THE
Vote Solar
INITIATIVE

FACTS

Passing the New York Solar Bill would:

- Extend the successful NY-Sun Initiative through 2023, solidifying New York's commitment to solar energy.
- Build 2,200 MW of solar, enough clean, reliable electricity to power 400,000 New York homes.
- Create thousands of new local jobs in New York.
- Save New Yorkers billions by reducing the need to fire up our dirtiest and most expensive fossil power plants.
- Spur millions of dollars of investment in the state's emerging clean energy economy.
- Bring New York out from the shadow of states like Massachusetts and New Jersey that have surpassed New York in solar development.

Albany to pass the solar bill.

"We thank Assemblyman Englebright, Assemblywoman Paulin and their colleagues for their leadership to date, and call on Speaker Silver to bring the bill to the floor for a vote without delay," said **Jackson Morris, director of strategic engagement at the Pace Energy & Climate Center**. "We then look forward to working with all parties to get this landmark solar proposal across the finish line this legislative session."

"Thanks to leadership from Assemblymembers Englebright and Paulin, we are a critical step closer to a long-term solar program that will keep driving down costs and maximizing benefits to New Yorkers," said **Carrie Cullen Hitt, senior vice president for state affairs at the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA)**.

"At a time when the state faces the dual challenges of an economy still in recovery and failing energy infrastructure, passing this solar bill will help build a stronger New York," said **Peter Olmsted, east coast policy advocate for Vote Solar**.

"By passing nearly every piece of legislation that environmentalists have prioritized this year, the Assembly has methodically checked off most of the boxes on the green agenda. But they've got one more very important bill to go. And lawmakers should not leave town this month before giving final passage to the New York Solar Bill and sending agreed-to legislation to Governor Cuomo for his signature. New York's sun is underemployed, and by passing this bill the Legislature can put it to work," said **Dave Gahl, executive director of Environmental Advocates of New York**.

"In the wake of Superstorm Sandy, New Yorkers understand all too well the urgent need to combat climate change and better prepare for its impacts. Solar power is ready to help New York tackle those challenges head-on," said **Pierre Bull, policy analyst at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)**.

"A stable solar marketplace has been a necessary prerequisite for SolarCity to complete over 1200 solar projects for New York residents and businesses, while employing over 130 people. This bill will provide long-term market certainty so that we can continue to invest in a growing New York industry," said **Lee Keshishian, regional vice president of east coast operations at SolarCity**, a national solar company that serves New York.

"EmPower Solar has grown from 5 to 50 employees over the past five years. This month we hired our first new team member since Hurricane Sandy decimated our operation, and we have several more hires planned for 2013. Passing this solar bill will provide policy stability so that responsible companies such as ours can continue to expand and build a highly skilled workforce," said **David G. Schieren, chief executive officer of Long Island-based EmPower Solar**.

"Our state's growing solar industry employs thousands of New Yorkers working to build our new energy economy. With its ambitious goals and long-term vision, a 10-year NY-Sun Initiative will keep creating good jobs up and down the state," said **Sail Van Nostrand, president of the New York Solar Energy Industries Association (NYSEIA)**.

About the New York Solar Bill:

The New York Solar Bill (A.5060b/S.2522) would build on the success of the **NY-Sun Initiative**, a public-private partnership designed to drive growth in the state's solar industry and lower solar costs for all New Yorkers. By extending NY-Sun for ten years, the Bill will:

- Build 2,200 MW of solar by 2023, enough clean, reliable electricity to power 400,000 New York homes.
- Create thousands of new local jobs and spur millions of dollars of investment in the state's emerging clean energy economy.
- Save New Yorkers billions of dollars by reducing the need to fire up its dirtiest and most expensive fossil power plants.

The New York Solar Bill has support from a coalition of businesses, trade associations and environmental groups, including: Alliance for Clean Energy New York, Borrego Solar, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, EDF Renewable Energy, Environmental Advocates of New York, Environment New York, E.ON Climate & Renewables North America, Mainstream Energy Corp., NRDC, The Nature Conservancy, New York League of Conservation Voters, New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPiRG), New York Solar Energy Industries Association (NYSEIA), Nexamp, Organizing for Action (OFA), Pace Energy & Climate Center, REC Solar, SolarCity, Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), Solar One, Sierra Club, SunEdison, Sungevity, SunPower Corp., Sunrun, Trinity Solar, and Vote Solar.

With enough solar to power 27,000 homes, New York currently ranks 12th in the country for total installed solar capacity. 3,300 New Yorkers are employed in the state's growing solar industry. In 2012, \$257 million was invested in New York to install solar on homes and businesses. This represents a 91% increase over the previous year and is expected to grow again in 2013.

Background Materials:

- The New York Solar Bill: <http://www.nysolarjobs.org/>
- U.S. Solar Market Insight: 2012 Year in Review: www.seia.org/smi

- The Solar Foundation's State Solar Jobs Map: www.solarstates.org

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