

## Environmental, civic, health, faith and business organizations support 100 percent renewable energy for Massachusetts.

Tuesday, September 19, 2017

Dear Chairman Barrett, Chairman Golden, and members of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy:

As leaders of environmental, civic, public health, faith, and business organizations representing tens of thousands of Massachusetts residents, we urge you to support *An Act transitioning Massachusetts to 100 percent renewable energy* (S.1849, H.3395).

We cannot afford to ignore the consequences of our dependence on dirty energy like oil and gas. Fossil fuels are polluting our air and water, leading to asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other health problems in our communities.

Global warming, driven by emissions from fossil fuels, is making extreme snow and rain storms more frequent and increasing the severity of droughts. Unless we move quickly to reduce pollution, sea levels could rise by more than 7 feet in the Boston area by the end of the century, while residents could experience up to 90 days of temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit each year by 2070.<sup>1</sup>

To protect our communities from the dangerous impacts of dirty energy, we must repower Massachusetts with 100 percent clean, renewable energy from sources like the sun and the wind.

Fortunately, clean energy and energy efficiency are growing rapidly. The amount of installed solar energy capacity in Massachusetts has increased more than 300-fold in the last ten years, and offshore wind is poised to play a major role in meeting our energy needs. New technologies like electric vehicles, energy storage, and net zero energy buildings will help put a 100 percent renewable future within reach.

A recent review of seven studies suggests that there are no insurmountable technological or economic barriers to repowering our society with 100 percent renewable energy.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the environmental and public health benefits, moving to renewable energy produced from local solar and wind installations will bring significant

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<sup>1</sup> *Climate Ready Boston*, City of Boston, December 2016. <[https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/20161207\\_climate\\_ready\\_boston\\_digital2.pdf](https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/20161207_climate_ready_boston_digital2.pdf)>

<sup>2</sup> *We Have the Power: 100% Renewable Energy for a Clean, Thriving America*, Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center and Frontier Group, March 2016. <<http://www.environmentmassachusettscenter.org/reports/mac/we-have-power-0>>

economic and job growth benefits to our communities, while protecting residents and businesses from the unpredictable cost of fossil fuels.

Massachusetts has a proud history of leadership on clean energy and climate action, including the Commonwealth's first-in-the-nation limits on carbon pollution from power plants in 2001 and the adoption of the Global Warming Solutions Act and Green Communities Act in 2008. With the Trump administration moving in the wrong direction on energy, Massachusetts must continue to lead the way forward.

An economy-wide commitment to 100 percent renewable energy would ensure that Massachusetts continues to progress rapidly on renewable energy, while setting a powerful example for other states to follow.

Already, dozens of cities like San Diego and Burlington, Vt., as well as major businesses like Google and Johnson & Johnson, have committed to 100 percent renewable energy targets. Hawaii has passed legislation to achieve 100 percent renewable electricity by 2045, and California is considering a similar target.

Please report favorably on *An Act transitioning Massachusetts to 100 percent renewable energy*. Our climate and our health can't wait.

Sincerely,

Environment Massachusetts  
350 Mass for a Better Future  
AIA Massachusetts  
Berkshire Environmental Action Team  
Boston Clean Energy Coalition  
Boston Climate Action Network  
Boston Community Capital  
Cape Downwinders  
Climate Action Brookline  
Climate Action Now  
Co-op Power  
Commonwealth Green Low-Income Housing Coalition  
Dismas House  
Environmental League of Massachusetts  
Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution  
Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Green Cambridge  
Green Committee of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Greening Greenfield  
Health Care Without Harm  
League of Women Voters of Massachusetts  
LISC Boston  
Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light

Massachusetts Quaker Legislative Action Network  
MASSPIRG  
MASSPIRG Students  
MassSolar  
Mothers Out Front Boston  
No Sharon Gas Pipeline/Clean Energy Now  
North Quabbin Energy  
Renewable Energy Worcester  
Sierra Club  
South Coast Neighbors United  
StopNED  
Toxics Action Center Campaigns  
U.S. Green Building Council - Massachusetts Chapter  
Unitarian Universalist Mass Action Network  
Vineyard Power  
West Roxbury Saves Energy