



TOWN OF EASTON
MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Town Administrator

DAVID A. COLTON
Town Administrator

February 11, 2016

Senator Brian A. Joyce
State House Room 320
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Michael D. Brady
State House Room 109E
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Shaunna L. O'Connell
State House Room 237
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Claire D. Cronin
State House Room 109E
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senators and Representatives:

I am writing to ask your support in urging the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to extend the existing SREC II program through calendar year 2016 and begin the process of putting a new reformed solar incentive program in place.

We were taken by surprise when DOER announced on Friday, February 5th, subject to further review, the agency has now received applications that are nearly 200 MW in excess of the program cap for qualification for systems larger than 25 KW, effectively closing this large segment of the market to the incentive program, including solar investments Easton is attempting to make. Easton's planned solar projects will not happen without this incentive. Further, only 94 MW of capacity remains within the SRECII program for systems under 25 KW in size. It is likely that interest in this program will result in fully subscribing the allocation for smaller systems later this spring.

As you know, the taxpayers and residents of the Town of Easton have benefitted greatly from the current SRECII program. Through it and the other components of solar energy policy we have developed approximately 2 megawatts (MW) of solar energy that has reduced energy bills in Easton by approximately \$200,000 and generated property tax and lease income. We are poised

to increase that savings by another \$80,000 per year through a long planned solar project, but have been stymied by the cap on public solar projects. We have great faith that the legislature will create space under the net metering cap through the bills currently in conference committee while maintaining the credit value for solar production at retail rate, and the other recommendations for effective solar policy outlined in the letter from the MMA to the conference committee delegates. However, that will be all for naught if SREC's are unavailable.

Beyond Easton, Massachusetts solar policies have had a positive effect on the economy and the environment. Climate change is as real as the \$791 million in 2014 investment and 15,000 solar-related jobs created as a result of that investment. In Easton, we have re-directed funds once paid to National Grid back into public education, public works and public safety.

Unfortunately, these benefits are in peril of evaporating as Massachusetts moves from a position of national leadership to the back of the line.

Thank you for your efforts and support on this important issue for our community, and please contact me if I can be of any help as you consider actions and paths forward on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David A. Colton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David A. Colton
Town Administrator

cc: Board of Selectmen
Michael Judge, Director of Renewable and Alternative Energy at DOER
Victoria Sclafani, Massachusetts Municipal Association