



February 7, 2018

Governor Charlie Baker
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker:

On January 23rd President Trump announced new 30% tariffs on all imported solar modules and cells. As you are aware, this misguided decision will deal a significant blow to the hundreds of solar companies and the nearly 15,000 full-time solar workers building the clean-energy economy in Massachusetts.

In addition, recent federal tax changes have created some uncertainty around the financing of solar projects. Unfortunately, this comes at an especially bad moment for the Commonwealth's solar future. Net metering caps have been hit in 230 communities across the Commonwealth stalling hundreds of projects, and the recent Eversource imposition of new solar charges threatens a large portion of the market.

These recent actions have raised the stakes even higher to ensure that the new Solar Massachusetts Renewable Targets (SMART) program – for the next 1,600 megawatts of home grown solar power – is properly implemented in these last months prior to launch. That means ensuring that the draft SMART tariff is modified to fix several serious flaws prior to Department of Public Utilities (DPU) approval, and facilitating a smooth, on-time opening of this long-anticipated successor to the state's solar energy program. In addition, we are asking the legislature to act on, and you to sign, legislation to reverse the Eversource solar charges and provide much needed relief from net metering caps.

As numerous experts have noted, the President's recent actions will eliminate rather than create American jobs. The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) estimates 23,000 jobs lost, nearly 700 of those job losses coming from the Commonwealth, and billions in industry retraction across the country as a direct result of the President's action. In Massachusetts, companies and customers such as our members, up and down the supply chain, will feel the impact, undermining the Commonwealth's leading record of solar job creation.

Along these lines, The Solar Foundation's 2017 jobs census shows Massachusetts has lost more than 3,000 solar jobs on a year-to-year basis, in part due to the uncertainty surrounding the President's pending actions on tariffs and mounting challenges at the state level. Solar jobs in Massachusetts declined by 21 percent from 2016.

In light of such harmful federal actions, state-level solar policies are more important than ever, and leading states like Massachusetts stand to lose the most if immediate action is not taken.

The undersigned organizations, representing thousands of Massachusetts workers and customers and hundreds of millions of dollars in investment, urge you to take action to address the headwinds facing Massachusetts' businesses by reaffirming the commitment to the solar industry that your administration has cultivated over the last several years.

Specifically, we ask that you direct DOER to consider measures to mitigate the impact of the federal tariff, and to work with the DPU to implement the SMART program in a way that enables all sectors of the state's solar industry to thrive, including fixing problems with the alternative on bill credit provisions and redesigning cost recovery. In addition, we will need your leadership in working with the legislature to secure a better resolution for Eversource's solar customers and additional space under the net metering caps.

We sincerely appreciate your long-standing commitment to our industry and our customers, and look forward to working with you to ensure the above priorities are implemented to continue to support Massachusetts' hundreds of solar businesses and thousands of workers and customers.

Sincerely,

Yours sincerely,



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Senator Michael Barrett, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities
and Energy

Rep. Thomas Golden, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy

Hon. Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Hon. Judith Judson, Commissioner, DOER

Hon. Angie O'Connor, Chairman, DPU