



# 2021 CONNECTICUT CLEAN ENERGY PRIORITIES



# DRIVING THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION: A GREEN RECOVERY

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The Northeast Clean Energy Council (NECEC) is dedicated to growing the clean energy economy in Connecticut and across the region in pursuit of our mission to create a world-class and equitable clean energy hub in the Northeast.

As the region continues to build back from the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 is an important year. Connecticut has the opportunity to ensure that the state's economy builds back better and people from all backgrounds are put to work in the clean energy sector. A vibrant clean energy industry will bring investment, equity, and jobs to Connecticut and ensure that citizens, businesses, and industries can take advantage of the benefits of a clean economy.

NECEC and its members stand ready to work with the General Assembly and Governor Lamont's Administration to achieve a cleaner, cheaper, more resilient and equitable energy future for Connecticut.

We are pleased to present our 2021 policy priorities.



# NECEC'S 2021 CONNECTICUT CLEAN ENERGY POLICY PRIORITIES

## Enact Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Goals

Governor Lamont signed Executive Order Number 3 on September 3, 2019, which among other directives, required the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to analyze pathways and recommend strategies to reach zero carbon emissions from the electric sector by 2040. Enshrining this commitment into law will set the state on a path to a decarbonized electric sector, which, combined with plans to reduce emissions from the transportation and building sectors, is necessary to meet economy-wide emissions goals. The Governor's proposed legislation would also authorize the procurement of a significant amount of energy efficiency and demand response, which will save customers money as we electrify the economy.

**Support:** SB882 provisions to decarbonize the electric sector by 2040 and procure energy efficiency and demand response resources.

## Strengthen Clean Energy Markets Through Procurement

Virtual net metering is available only to state, municipal, and agricultural customers. With a limited set of beneficiaries, all of whom face increased hurdles to solar deployment, it is time to remove virtual net metering caps. For state and municipal customers, procurement regulations increase the time and cost of solar deployment, but virtual net metering allows flexibility in project design and offtake that allows state agencies and municipalities to demonstrate their commitment to clean energy. Virtual net metering can also deliver much needed energy savings to municipalities.

**Support with amendments:** SB952 to address the virtual net metering cap.

## Ensure Future Incentive Programs are Designed Effectively

Legislative action over the past two years has outlined a pathway towards a new generation of clean energy incentive programs. PURA has finalized the program design for the successor programs for residential solar, which resulted in an innovative approach to compensating residential solar projects. Now, PURA is considering the successor procurements to the LREC/ZREC programs in Docket 20-07-01. NECEC and its members are actively engaged in this process and are working to ensure a positive outcome that will allow for a robust and sustained commercial solar market.



## **Pave the way for the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) and Address Transportation Sector Emissions**

Transportation pollution causes negative health effects for Connecticut residents, such as asthma, and accelerates and worsens the impacts of climate change. Through TCI, Connecticut can efficiently achieve significant emissions reductions from the transportation sector. Modeled on the successful Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), TCI leverages the lessons learned in that program and applies them to the transportation sector. Further, the proceeds from TCI can be reinvested within the state to spark innovation, provide benefits to Connecticut residents, and accelerate the transition to a clean transportation future. TCI also contains a crucial Environmental Justice commitment that will ensure overburdened communities benefit from the program.

**Support:** SB884 to implement the TCI Program.

## **Establish an Energy Storage Roadmap for Connecticut**

Energy storage technology represents a significant opportunity to build a more resilient, dynamic, cost-effective electricity system. In addition, storage, when paired with renewable resources like solar and wind, can transform intermittent renewables into dispatchable power. Connecticut should consider the role of storage in clean energy policy, including how storage interacts with offshore wind procurements.

### **Establish a One-Gigawatt by 2030 Energy Storage Deployment Target**

- Establishing an aggressive, but achievable target for the deployment of energy storage will send a strong message that Connecticut is dedicated to realizing the potential of storage as part of its overall clean energy strategy.

### **Explore and Implement Regulatory Reforms to Fully Compensate Energy Storage**

- The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) is currently considering the adoption of an energy storage program in Docket 17-12-03RE03. NECEC supports a well-designed program that properly compensates nimble storage technologies for delivering significant customer and grid benefits.

**Support with amendments:** SB952 to establish deployment goals and programs to support energy storage. Remove Section 5 that would allow utilities to own solar generation.



## Create a Bridge to the New Solar Program

Successor programs to replace net metering will begin in 2022, but the Residential Solar Incentive Program (RSIP) will run out of funding before then. Without a legislative fix, this could lead to a lapse in incentives for residential customers to deploy solar, a disruption in the market, and a challenge for consumers. The General Assembly should act to ensure that residential customers are able to deploy solar in their homes while the successor programs are being finalized and implemented.

**Support:** **HB6106** to revise property tax exemptions for certain renewable energy resources and hydropower facilities.

**Oppose:** **HB6498** to add unnecessary siting restrictions and decommissioning requirements on solar development.

## Build on Support for Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency will be crucial to ensuring that we meet our climate commitments in the most cost-effective and efficient manner. Additionally, stability and robust support for energy efficiency will lead to local jobs deliver cost savings to customers. Connecticut should develop programs to address health and safety issues that prevent low-income customers from participating in efficiency programs. Another key strategy is updating appliance efficiency standards to ensure that Connecticut consumers continue to have access to high-efficiency products.

**Support:** **SB863** to update energy efficiency standards.

## For more information about NECEC's 2021 Connecticut Clean Energy Priorities, please contact:

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# NECEC'S POLICY TEAM



**Peter Rothstein** is the **President of NECEC**. Previously, Peter was part of the Flagship Ventures team and founder of Allegro Strategy, a consultant, advisor and interim executive with early-stage cleantech start-ups. Peter has been in early-stage deal or executive roles with several cleantech companies, including Mascoma, Planar Energy Devices, Ze-gen, Novomer, Boston-Power, and Mechanology. He is actively involved in a range of leading cleantech and entrepreneurial organizations, including the National Renewable Energy Lab's VC Advisory Board, catalyst to MIT Deshpande Center solar and energy storage MIT projects. He serves as a Board member to Cleantech Open. [prothstein@necec.org](mailto:prothstein@necec.org).



**Jeremy McDiarmid** is **NECEC Vice President, Policy & Government Affairs** and leads NECEC's policy and government affairs team. Prior to joining NECEC, he served as Commercial Business Development Manager at SunBug Solar. Before joining SunBug, Jeremy advised Acadia Center on organizational and operational priorities, having previously spent six years there as a Staff Attorney and then Massachusetts Director. He also served three years as Senior Director for Innovation and Industry Support at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, where he led and executed programs to advance clean energy development within the Commonwealth. [jmcdiarmid@necec.org](mailto:jmcdiarmid@necec.org).



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**Dan Bosley** is **NECEC's Government Relations Executive**. He served in the Massachusetts Legislature for 24 years as the State Representative from the First Berkshire District. During his time as State Representative, he served in several leadership positions, including chair of the Joint Committee on Energy and as a member of the conference committee on budgeting. He is credited with several job creation bills creating thousands of jobs across the Commonwealth as well as being the co-author of a groundbreaking life science bill and electricity restructuring in Massachusetts. [dbosley@necec.org](mailto:dbosley@necec.org).



**Meggie Quackenbush** is **NECEC's Senior Communications Manager**. She previously served as deputy press secretary to Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey and deputy director of communications at MassDevelopment, Massachusetts' quasi-public economy development agency. She worked as a freelance reporter writing for The Dorchester Reporter and Boston Business Journal, and started her career at WGBH. Meggie holds a master's degree in journalism from Boston University and a bachelor's degree from St. Lawrence University. [mquackenbush@necec.org](mailto:mquackenbush@necec.org).

