

## Western Massachusetts Solar Forum – Session 1 Attendee Q&A Questions/Comments

*The following are questions received from Attendees during Session 1. These questions have been shared with Session 1 speakers to inform them of the engagement and issues of interest to the community. We are not asking or expecting the speakers to offer direct answers to these questions. The Clean Energy Extension and our partners are also using these questions to inform remaining Sessions and the agenda for the anticipated Part II of the forum in 2024. Thank you for these questions.*

1. Is the state looking at making consumer time-of-use electric pricing to drive the lowering of peak demand and increase electricity use when renewables are sending excess energy into our grid?
2. We cannot wait 4-5 years! The government needs to regulate utilities so that the financial incentive of doing business in MA is not stymieing our actions in the face of the climate crisis. They are strangling expansion.
3. It is clear than we must not sacrifice forests for solar. How can the siting of solar on forested and other natural lands that sequester carbon be disincentivized to the point where it will not be done?
4. The premise of the DOER study and statements is that municipalities can determine where solar can be built. Statute doesn't allow this unless public health, welfare and safety. This discussion misses the mark.
5. For Kathy: Can you clarify if Cap. Improvement Projects upgrade costs are being spread out now, or if the upgrade costs are still left to the unlucky entity who encounters a need for upgrade b4 adding solar?
6. Are land trusts going to be able to loosen development restrictions so as to permit solar arrays and battery storage on the lands they have protected?
7. I'd like to understand more about the structures that continue to reward conventional power generation (i.e., forward reserve auctions). Also, solar - while promising - has some limitations. What are the plans for enhancing storage capacity?
8. For Elizabeth: The Tech Potential of Solar Study is a fabulous tool. Wondering how it will inform new state solar regs to incentivize and disincentivize solar development. As you know, local zoning laws are being challenged w/ lawsuits in small towns.
9. Why are utilities trying to take over the market for community solar? How are you going to control that market?
10. If the properties that score high in solar potential are private property, are developers targeting those landowners for potential development? How are landowners reacting to having their parcels identified has having high potential?
11. How will the state include members of Agricultural Commissions prior to creating guidelines for the use of agricultural (working) lands?
12. For Katherine Antos: do % goals to conserve NWL include only MA-owned lands or also privately owned lands, that make up the majority of our forested lands?

13. Q for E. Mahoney: For parcels that already have solar, the study indicated far greater potential than has actually been built. What has prevented solar developments to date from obtaining the technical potential? How can these obstacles be removed?
14. Is workforce development training people in low-income and EJ communities?
15. Equitable access also is a top priority for solar.
16. For the DOER's technical potential of solar study, how did the team determine a power density of 1.3 MW per acre?
17. Why can't the Commonwealth buy out the utilities so that they can address climate change more seriously?
18. Thank you, Climate Chief Hoffer! It's clear that you understand the wide complexities of the situation we're in and "solutions." I'd be interested to learn more about how the state will help support the development of equitable community solar.
19. Q for Elizabeth Mahony re: the Technical Potential Solar Study: Can I obtain the data shown in the interactive online map so I can use it in my own GIS? For example, I'd like to tally the total technical potential of solar in my town (Amherst).
20. Shortly after entering office Gov. Healey stated that we would need to annually deploy 1GW of solar to meet energy targets. How can we use foresters to identify failing woodlands for affordable solar development? Rooftops/canopies are not enough.
21. When do you think H.B.3685, An Act Insuring Solar Energy Access (specifically focused on condominium associations), to be approved by the Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy Committee for full consideration by the Legislature?