

## Bill H7808 - Relating to Public Utilities and Carriers – Net Metering

Sol Power is an employee owned solar installation company based in Charlestown, Rhode Island.

Sol Power supports removing the system size limits for solar net metering. Additionally we believe it is important to leave the value of solar net metering credits unchanged for small systems (under 25kW).

Removing the system size limits for solar net metering would be a huge relief for our business and is our top legislative priority. One of the most frequent and difficult questions we receive from our customers is: “Why am I not allowed to generate enough energy to power my home?” The answer is that the utility applies a one-size-fits-all calculation to limit the size of a solar installation. That calculation does not work for many homes and our customers are forced to install solar installations that cannot generate enough power to meet their needs.

Removing the system size limits for solar net metering would:

- Allow customers to generate enough solar electricity to meet their needs
- Increase the amount of clean energy on our grid
- Support Rhode Island’s goals for electrification
- Dramatically improve the residential customer experience of going solar in Rhode Island
- Eliminate time wasted and delays for installers and the utility to police system sizing

Small scale solar net metering systems (under 25 kW in size) account for only 3% our state’s net metering. The majority of solar net metering is attributed to large systems and virtual net metering sites. There are 10,000 homeowners and small businesses that have invested in generating their own clean energy with solar. We believe that changes made to the net metering statute should leave the value of solar net metering credits unchanged for this small part of the industry.

Currently all small scale (under 25 kW) net metering systems receive a full net metering credit for all of their solar generation. Implementation of excess credits for small scale systems would reduce this value for existing and future net metering systems. We recommend carving out a space for the small scale solar market to preserve the current value of a full net metering credit for small systems.

Alternatively, Senate bill S2536 preserves the value of net metering for small scale systems in a different way. Solar net metering credits are carried over as credits, not changed into a monetary value. Unused credits after a year are then cashed out at a reduced rate. This increases the value of energy that small systems use on their own, and disincentivizes generating more energy than is needed. The overall effect is that the total value of solar is unchanged for small systems, but generating excess energy is disincentivized.

An important semantic update we would like to request is specifying an annual period for credit and usage calculations. In most instances the phrase “applicable billing period” should be replaced with “applicable annual billing period.” We believe this is the intention of the bill and it is the current interpretation of the aforementioned billing period according to the utility and PUC. We encourage you to specify that the billing period is annual to ensure this critical component is not left up to interpretation.

Fixing the issues with small scale solar net metering system sizes would have a tremendous benefit for our business, the RI solar industry, solar adopters, and meeting our state’s climate goals. We strongly support removing the system size limits on net metering. Additionally we advocate for preserving the current value of solar net metering with a specific carve out for small scale systems under 25 kW in size.

Sincerely,



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