



# Coalition for Sensible Solar Regulation

## Unleashing the Potential of Commercial and Community Solar in CT

March 1, 2022





# Coalition for Sensible Solar Regulation

CSSR comprises over 40 organizations representing 168 municipalities, environmental organizations representing over 75,000 members, business leaders, solar installers, local clean energy leaders, including the CT Conference of Municipalities, CT League of Conservation Voters, CT Green Building Council, CT Solar & Storage Assoc., Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, EV Club of CT, 350CT, conservation law foundation, Common Sense Fund, smart seed, Lodestar Energy, etc.





# We propose relaxing constraints on Commercial and Community solar

- Double program caps on renewable programs, including:
  - 50 MW for commercial (up to 2 MW)
    - allocate this 50MW increase to projects in distressed communities
  - 25 MW for Shared Clean Energy Facilities (SCEF) and
  - 10 MW for low-emission projects
- Remove the limit of the size of an array to local electric load.
  - Use a portion of the excess compensation to support low and moderate income (LMI) customers
- In addition, we propose a 6 cents per kWh adder for solar canopies

*N.B. the focus here is **commercial** and **community** solar, NOT residential or utility-scale.*

# The cost of increasing caps is negligible...

|  | Commercial          | SCEF                |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Program Cost (per kWh)                      | 17.1 ¢ <sup>1</sup> | 11.8 ¢ <sup>2</sup> |
| 2. Avoided Energy Costs (per kWh) <sup>3</sup> | 9.0 ¢               | 9.0 ¢               |
| 3. Net Program Cost (per kWh)                  | 8.1 ¢               | 2.8 ¢               |
| 4. Proposed Cap Increase                       |                     |                     |
| a. Megawatts                                   | 50                  | 25                  |
| b. Gigawatt-Hours <sup>4</sup>                 | 74.5                | 37.2                |
| 5. Cost of Cap Increase                        |                     |                     |
| a. Total                                       | \$6.0 million       | \$0.9 million       |
| b. per kWh <sup>5</sup>                        | 0.021 ¢             | 0.003 ¢             |
| c. per Month for Avg. Ratepayer <sup>6</sup>   | 15 ¢                | 2 ¢                 |

## Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Comprises 7.1 cents for RECs and 10 cents for net metering (IRP, p. 87)

<sup>2</sup> Comprises 9.3 cents avg. accepted Year 2 SCEF bid plus 2.5 cents customer credits

<sup>3</sup> Electric system benefits of solar, from Value of DER Study

<sup>4</sup> Based on a capacity factor of 17%

<sup>5</sup> Based on total state usage of 28.8 TWh (IRP, p. 19)

<sup>6</sup> Based on average monthly usage of 700 kWh

# ...and the benefits are substantial

- Advantages of Commercial Solar:
  - Lowers costs and generates revenues for CT businesses
    - Produces local, well-paying jobs
  - Is an effective tool to advance energy equity:
    - Preferences are given to distressed communities
    - SCEF can lower energy costs for vulnerable populations
  - Is necessary for CT to reach its clean energy goals
  - When paired with local storage and grid-scale solar, improves the performance and lowers the cost of the grid.
  - Siting considerations
    - Reduces the need for solar on farmland and forests
    - Faces fewer siting challenges, so it can be deployed quickly
- We need to put solar where there is room
  - PACE estimates CT has 7.1 GW of potential rooftop commercial solar
  - This potential cannot be realized by limiting each project to local load
  - CT businesses of all sizes could benefit from the revenue by generating electricity on their own premises



Photo Credit: Asante Energy



# Solar canopies can play a big role in meeting our energy needs



## Potential of solar canopies in CT

- 8,400 sites
- 7 GW
- 37% of current usage

We propose a 6 cent per kWh adder for solar canopy projects



# We urge Connecticut to consider a significant expansion of local solar & storage

- Traditional thinking:
  - Large, central station power plants are the most cost-effective because of economies of scale
  - Utility-scale renewables are the cheapest, fastest way to meet clean energy goals
  - Local solar & storage is too expensive and will increase costs & rates
- A new paradigm:
  - New & better models
  - Scaling utility renewables and local solar and storage maximizes ratepayer savings
  - Grid of the future has at least 10x more local solar & storage

## Sources:

- [Why Local Solar Costs Less: A New Roadmap for the Lowest Cost Grid](#)
- [Expanding Local Clean Energy Could Save New York \\$28 Billion by 2050](#)
- [Rooftop Solar and Home Batteries Make a Clean Grid Vastly More Affordable](#) (Podcast)
- [Local Solar Roadmap](#)
- [The critical role of local solar in achieving 80% clean electricity by 2030](#) (Start at 9:30)

