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ENVIRONMENT MASSACHUSETTS
Clean Air. Clean Water. Open Space.

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City Council
795 Massachusetts Ave
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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

To the members of the City Council,

I am the Field Associate with Environment Massachusetts. We are a statewide, citizen based environmental advocacy group, and we are reaching out to local elected officials for their support on a campaign to increase the use of solar energy in the state.

Net-metering is a program that allows consumers to sell excess electricity produced via solar panels back to the electricity grid for a profit. By making it more affordable to install solar panels on homes, businesses, and government buildings, Massachusetts' net-metering program has encouraged renewable energy investment and has created new clean energy jobs.

Unfortunately, our net-metering program is capped, and we are beginning to bump up against this cap. As a result, developers are wary of taking on new and worthwhile solar projects because there is no guarantee that they will receive net-metering funds for their work. Increasing Massachusetts' net-metering cap will restore financial certainty to the solar market and reaffirm our commitment to clean and renewable energy.

In order to make this happen we are circulating a coalition letter in support of a bill that will raise the net-metering cap. Over 55 solar businesses and several cities and towns have already signed onto the letter statewide. The letter is addressed to Senator Ben Downing and Representative John Keenan, the chairmen of the Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy Committee. The letter is included, and we would love to have Cambridge sign onto it. All you need to do to sign on is pass a resolution in support of the bill, and I will add Cambridge to the list of official signatories on the letter.

Sincerely,

MacKenzie Clark

MacKenzie Clark
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Environment Massachusetts
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Dear Chairmen Downing and Keenan,

We, the undersigned, write to you in support of increasing the cap set on Massachusetts solar net-metering program. Both SB1664: An Act Improving Neighborhood Solar and Net-Metering in the Commonwealth and HB1776: An Act Relative to Net-Metering, raise the net-metering cap and will significantly increase access to solar and its rate of production throughout Massachusetts.

Everyday of the year, enough sun shines down on Massachusetts to power the state multiple times over with solar energy. In 2008, Massachusetts adopted net-metering policies as a means of harnessing the state's vast solar potential and to expand solar development. Net-metering allows consumers to use their own on-site generation against a future bill when they have a greater consumption than production. By making it more affordable to install solar panels on homes, businesses, and government buildings, Massachusetts' net-metering program has encouraged renewable energy investment and has created new clean energy jobs.

Unfortunately, our net-metering program is capped at 1% and 2% of peak load for residential/commercial properties and governmental properties, respectively, and we are beginning to bump up against this cap. As a result, developers are wary of taking on new and worthwhile solar projects because there is no guarantee that they will receive net-metering funds for their work.

Massachusetts has historically led the nation in forward-thinking clean energy policy, and we must continue to do so. Our state solar programs should encourage solar development, not hinder it. Supporting SB 1664 and HB 1776 and increasing Massachusetts' net-metering cap will restore financial certainty to the solar market and reaffirm our commitment to clean and renewable energy.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We urge you to report favorably a bill out of committee to increase Massachusetts' net-metering cap. We look forward to working with you on this matter.

Sincerely,