

Legislation Text

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Celebrating the expansion of solar energy offerings through Philadelphia Energy Authority's Solarize Philly Program.

WHEREAS, The generating of energy which produces no greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and reduces air pollution is necessary to Philadelphia in order to provide the citizens Constitutional guarantee of a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of the environment; and

WHEREAS, Climate change, as a result of burning fossil fuels for energy, is responsible for the denigration of public health, which disproportionately affects low-income communities, communities of color, and urban communities who most often have to deal directly with the consequences of polluting power plants and the health risks that accompany living within close proximity to these non-renewable energy sources; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is one of the most energy-burdened cities in the United States, meaning that on average, residents pay a higher percentage of their income for utilities; and

WHEREAS, Rooftop solar energy is a cost-effective alternative for electricity generation that improves public health, and creates local jobs and long-lasting energy affordability; and

WHEREAS, Energy insecurity means forgoing food or medicine to pay for utilities, setting the home to an unsafe or unhealthy temperature, or being at risk of utility shutoff; and

WHEREAS, Low and moderate-income households and people of color disproportionately deal with energy insecurity and often lack access to affordable energy provided by rooftop solar; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, the Philadelphia Energy Authority launched Solarize Philly, a group discount program to support homeowners and business owners to install solar together at a reduced price with additional consumer protections; and

WHEREAS, Rooftop solar helps Philadelphians power their homes with clean energy while lowering utility bills for homeowners, creating local workforce opportunities for installers, and reducing carbon emissions that contribute to climate change; and

WHEREAS, As of 2021, over 750 households from across the City have already gone solar through Solarize Philly, making it the largest Solarize program in the nation; and

WHEREAS, To further the goal that all Philadelphians enjoy clean, affordable, and local energy resources, Solarize Philly has expanded its offerings to ensure that homeowners of all income levels can opt to go solar with a \$0-down lease option and no minimum credit score; and

WHEREAS, Solarize Philly has also expanded its offerings for commercial, industrial and retail properties to

include additional financing tools like Power Purchase Agreements; and

WHEREAS, To provide these new offerings, the Philadelphia Energy Authority added PosiGen Solar, a Louisiana-based solar company opening their Pennsylvania headquarters in Philadelphia as part of Solarize Philly serving residential customers; Superior Solar Design, serving residential customers; EDP Renewables serving commercial, industrial and retail customers, and in their fifth year returning with Solarize Philly, Philadelphia-based solar installer and educator, Solar States, serving residential and commercial customers; and

WHEREAS, Solarize Philly is just one of the ways in which Philadelphia Energy Authority's leadership has helped connect residents to clean energy and bring further investment to our local economy; and

WHEREAS, Solarize Philly successfully installed rooftop solar on 50 low- and moderate-income homes with the Solar Savings Grant Program, and helped fund Bright Solar Futures, Pennsylvania's first high school vocational solar program, the first of its kind in the country; and

WHEREAS, Through its suite of programs, the Philadelphia Energy Authority aims to support 1,000 low and moderate-income households to go solar by 2026, to create 10,000 jobs and a well-trained, diverse, clean energy workforce; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby congratulates the Philadelphia Energy Authority on the expansion of the solar energy offerings through its Solarize Philly program.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Philadelphia Energy Authority, further evidencing the sincere respect of this legislative body.