

# An Act to Encourage Solar Development on Buildings and Disturbed Land

[H.3225](#) Representatives Lindsay Sabadosa & Sean Garballey, and [S.2150](#) Senator Paul Mark

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS ACT

**This Act provides permanent incentives for siting solar projects where they have the least environmental impact (on buildings and disturbed lands) and by doing so fosters a stable Massachusetts solar industry working to achieve the Commonwealth climate goals.**

Massachusetts is building a robust renewable energy infrastructure. But to the extent possible such development should not be at the expense of irreplaceable forests and natural lands, which provide carbon sequestration, clean water, flood and erosion control and a good quality of life for Massachusetts residents.

To increase solar while preserving natural lands the top priority locations for solar projects should be sites with minimal natural value, such as:

- Parking lot canopies, Brownfields, Roadway cuts
- Rooftops of residential, commercial and industrial buildings

because ***every megawatt of solar on buildings or disturbed land is one less megawatt that needs to be on natural land.***

Incentives in current laws and regulations have been adequate for some small-scale rooftop solar, but their caps, limits and phase-outs are not appropriate for larger projects on commercial and industrial buildings and on disturbed lands. A different framework is needed to drive solar development in top priority locations for new solar projects.



## ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF THIS ACT

**For employment:** Creates jobs and stable employment in the construction trades by providing predictable incentives or projects on buildings and disturbed locations that don't sunset or expire.

**For the grid:** Increases power supplied in urban and industrial areas, where demand is highest, reducing transmission costs and the need for costly grid upgrades while increasing grid resiliency.

**For property owners:** Reduces energy costs and provides a potential revenue stream. When paired with small-scale storage systems provides greater building resiliency as well as grid benefits.

**For environmental justice and rural communities:** Provides grants for roof replacement or repair if needed to make rooftop solar installations viable, with priority given to environmental justice and rural communities.

**For the general public:** Protects against the effects of increasing summer temperatures and winter snow and ice thanks to shade from parking lot canopies.

**For other states:** Offers model legislation to emulate in states grappling with the same issues.

## WHAT THIS ACT DOES

- Removes constraints on deployment of future solar projects on buildings and disturbed land by removing net metering phase-outs and caps tied to aggregate installed solar capacity.

- Sets a 100% net metering rate for future solar projects on buildings and disturbed land, regardless of size.
- Raises the size of future solar projects on buildings and disturbed land that get net metering from 2MWac to 5MWac.
- Requires that DOER and DPU increase incentives to build on sites where solar installations are most appropriate:
  - o Exempts future projects on buildings and disturbed land from the declining incentive structure of the SMART program or any successor program;
  - o Provides additional incentives for future projects on buildings and disturbed land, e.g., parking lot canopies;
  - o Promulgates regulations that allow adjustment of incentives based on market conditions for energy, labor, steel, and other materials.
- Requires EEA to investigate the use of federal funds and funds held in the transitional escrow account to encourage the equitable deployment of built-land solar.
- Directs The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to create a grant program for roof repair or replacement as part of a rooftop solar project, if needed to make solar an economically sound choice with priority for environmental justice communities.

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Photo credits: MassDOT (Rooftop), US Department of Energy (Parking Lots), Paul Dale (Highway), MassCEC (Brownfield)

