

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 4530

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 29, 2025

Sponsored by:

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Senator JOHN F. MCKEON

District 27 (Essex and Passaic)

Assemblywoman LUANNE M. PETERPAUL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblywoman MARGIE DONLON, M.D.

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblyman ROBERT J. KARABINCHAK

District 18 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

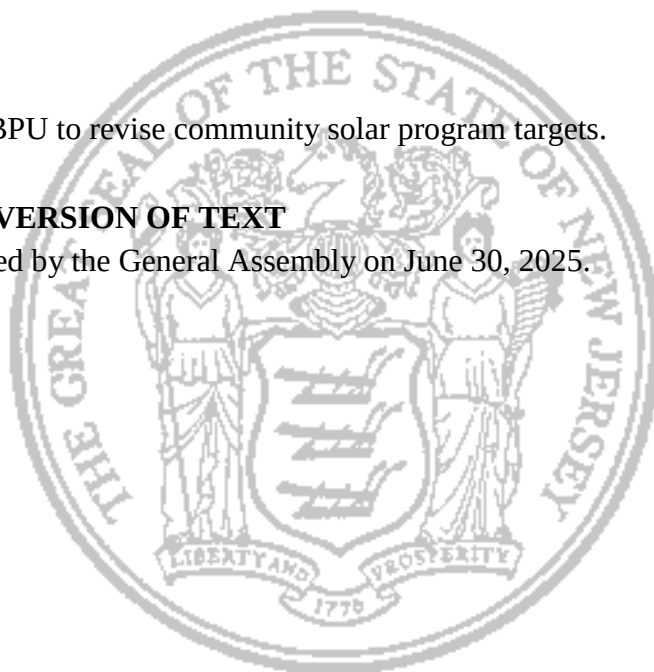
Senators Greenstein, Singleton, Assemblywoman Katz, Assemblymen Venezia and Bailey

SYNOPSIS

Requires BPU to revise community solar program targets.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As amended by the General Assembly on June 30, 2025.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning solar energy and amending P.L.2018, c.17.

2

3 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
4 *of New Jersey:*

5

6 1. Section 5 of P.L.2018, c.17 (C.48:3-87.11) is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 5. a. No later than 210 days after the date of enactment of
9 P.L.2018, c.17 (C.48:3-87.8 et al.), the Board of Public Utilities
10 shall adopt, pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,”
11 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations
12 establishing a “Community Solar Energy Pilot Program” to permit
13 customers of an electric public utility to participate in a solar energy
14 project that is remotely located from their properties but is within
15 their electric public utility service territory to allow for a credit to
16 the customer's utility bill equal to the electricity generated that is
17 attributed to the customer's participation in the solar energy project.

18 b. The rules and regulations developed by the board shall
19 establish:

20 (1) a capacity limit for individual solar energy projects to a
21 maximum of five megawatts per project;

22 (2) an annual capacity limit for all solar energy projects under
23 the pilot program;

24 (3) geographic limitations for solar energy projects and
25 participating customers;

26 (4) a minimum number of participating customers for each solar
27 energy project;

28 (5) the value of the credit on each participating customer's bill;

29 (6) standards to limit the land use impact of a solar energy
30 project as required in subsection r. of section 38 of P.L.1999, c.23
31 (C.48:3-87);

32 (7) the provision of access to solar energy projects for low and
33 moderate income customers;

34 (8) standards to ensure the ability of residential and commercial
35 customers to participate in solar energy projects, including
36 residential customers in multifamily housing;

37 (9) standards for connection to the distribution system of an
38 electric public utility; and

39 (10) provisions to minimize impacts to the distribution system
40 of an electric public utility.

41 c. The board shall make available on its Internet website
42 information on solar energy projects whose owners are seeking
43 participants.

44 d. The board shall establish standards and an application
45 process for owners of solar energy projects who wish to be included

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly floor amendments adopted June 30, 2025.

1 in the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program. The standards for
2 the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program shall include, but need
3 not be limited to, a verification process to ensure that the solar
4 energy projects are producing an amount of energy that is greater
5 than or equal to the amount of energy that is being credited to its
6 participating customer's electric utility bills pursuant to subsection
7 b. of this section, and consumer protection measures. Projects
8 approved by the board shall have at least two participating
9 customers.

10 The board may restrict qualified solar energy projects to those
11 located on brownfields, landfills, areas designated in need of
12 redevelopment, in underserved communities, or on commercial
13 rooftops.

14 e. Subject to review by the board, an electric public utility shall
15 be entitled to full and timely cost recovery for all costs incurred in
16 implementation and compliance with this section.

17 f. No later than 36 months after adoption of the rules and
18 regulations required pursuant to subsection b. of this section, the
19 board shall adopt rules and regulations, pursuant to the
20 “Administrative Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
21 seq.), to convert the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program to a
22 permanent program. The board shall adopt rules and regulations for
23 the permanent program that set forth standards for projects owned
24 by **‘[electric public utilities,]’** special purpose entities **‘[.],’** and
25 nonprofit entities. The rules and regulations shall also:

26 (1) limit the capacity of each solar energy project to a maximum
27 of five megawatts;

28 (2) (a) establish a goal for the conditional registration of 225
29 megawatts of solar energy projects prior to June 1, 2024, with an
30 additional 275 megawatts prior to June 1, 2024 if qualified
31 applications exceed 225 megawatts, and an additional 250
32 megawatts prior to June 1, 2025 if qualified applications exceed 500
33 megawatts [, and at least an additional 150 megawatts per year
34 thereafter, taking into account any changes to the SREC program];
35 and

36 (b) stipulate that the board shall open registration, by ‘[August]
37 October’ 1, 2025, for 3,000 megawatts of solar energy projects in
38 addition to the conditional registration goals already established
39 pursuant to this paragraph. The board shall accept and approve
40 registrations pursuant to this subparagraph until the earlier of
41 December 31, 2029 or such time as the 3,000 megawatts of solar
42 energy projects are completely registered. The board shall set
43 SREC-II levels and guaranteed bill credit discount levels as
44 appropriate to enable the complete registration of 3,000 megawatts
45 of solar energy projects by December 31, 2029;

- 1 (3) set geographic limitations for solar energy projects and
- 2 participating customers;
- 3 (4) provide for a minimum number of participating customers
- 4 for each solar energy project;
- 5 (5) require the provision of access to solar energy projects for
- 6 low and moderate income customers;
- 7 (6) establish standards to ensure the ability of residential and
- 8 commercial customers to participate in solar energy projects,
- 9 including residential customers in multifamily housing;
- 10 (7) establish a method for determining the value of the credit on
- 11 each participating customer's bill;
- 12 (8) establish timeframes for the credit available to the customer;
- 13 (9) establish standards and methods to verify solar electric
- 14 energy generation on a monthly basis for a solar energy project;
- 15 (10) establish standards consistent with the land use provisions
- 16 for solar energy projects as provided in subsections r., s., and t. of
- 17 section 38 of P.L.1999, c.23 (C.48:3-87);
- 18 (11) establish standards, fees, and uniform procedures for solar
- 19 energy projects to be connected to the distribution system of an
- 20 electric public utility;
- 21 (12) minimize impacts to the distribution system of an electric
- 22 public utility;
- 23 (13) require monthly reporting requirements for the operators of
- 24 solar energy projects to the electric public utility, project customers,
- 25 and the board;
- 26 (14) require reporting by the electric public utility to the operator
- 27 of a solar energy project on the value of credits to the participating
- 28 customer's bills;
- 29 (15) require transferability, portability, and buy-out provisions
- 30 for customers who participate in community solar energy projects;
- 31 (16) establish requirements and standards that provide for the
- 32 auditing and enforcement of a solar energy project's compliance
- 33 with the provisions of this section and the rules and regulations
- 34 adopted pursuant thereto, including the project's compliance with
- 35 commitments related to providing access to solar energy projects to
- 36 low- and moderate-income customers and bill crediting; and
- 37 (17) allow, in a form and manner to be determined by the board,
- 38 low- and moderate-income residential customers to self-attest to the
- 39 customer's income as an acceptable income verification method for
- 40 participation in a solar energy project.
- 41 g. As used in this section:
- 42 "Solar energy project" means a system containing one or more
- 43 solar panels and associated equipment.
- 44 "Solar panel" means an elevated panel or plate, or a canopy or
- 45 array thereof, that captures and converts solar radiation to produce

1 electric power, and is approved by the board to be included in the
2 Community Solar Energy Pilot Program.

3 “Solar power” includes flat plate, focusing solar collectors, or
4 photovoltaic solar cells and excludes the base or foundation of the
5 panel, plate, canopy, or array.

6 (cf: P.L.2023, c.200, s.1)

7

8 2. This act shall take effect immediately.