



Engineers Labor-Employer Cooperative
The Labor-Management Fund of Operating Engineers Local 825
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With the Energy Master Plan's goal of 12.2 GW of solar by year 2030 and 17.2 GW of by year 2035, or approximately 950MW per year, New Jersey is aiming to achieve three times what the solar market has delivered in the past five years. In addition, New Jersey's Board Public Utilities, as well as the Murphy Administration, has stressed the goal of creating green jobs and a green economy through implementation of the Energy Master Plan. However, in order to reach these goals, New Jersey must maximize all proven approaches to solar development, including incorporating the State's electric distribution companies into the market.

Our State's electric distribution companies, such as PSE&G, have the expertise to deliver utility scale generation projects, and with the use of local labor. Our members and contractors have successfully partnered with our state's private utility companies on many generation and distribution projects. These partnerships are key to reaching the State's green jobs and green economy goal as they use our State's local labor workforce, which ensures the economic contributions of these projects stay within the local economy.

Moving forward, New Jersey will need to employ and "all-hands on deck" approach, which will require increasing landfill and brownfield solar, the type of projects PSE&G's Solar 4 All® Program has a proven track record of delivering.

Landfill and brownfield solar farms are typically among the most difficult to develop, yet their benefits are far reaching. In addition to providing clean, renewable energy, these projects create jobs and stimulate economic growth, a key consideration as the state and national recover from the severe economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PSE&G's Solar 4 All® Program has developed 12 landfill and brownfield sites that together encompass more than 260 acres and include 263,000 solar panels that generate enough clean, renewable energy to power more than 14,000 NJ homes.

Specifically, we believe that tapping into the experience and technical capabilities of electric distribution companies like PSE&G will significantly improve the probability of achieving the state's ambitious solar goals. Landfill and brownfield solar deliver grid-connected power, an underdeveloped resource in New Jersey where only about 21% of solar capacity is grid connected, which is among the lowest percentage among the leading solar states in the country.

Landfill and brownfield solar projects also promote energy independence, create jobs and transform blighted, unproductive properties into economically viable community assets. The BPU's Solar Successor Program should continue to encourage landfill and brownfield projects, and utility initiatives like PSE&G Solar 4 All® should be part of the program.

The Engineers Labor-Employer Cooperative is a labor-management trust that represents the combined interests of the nearly 8,000 members of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825, and the signatory union contractors who employ them. As a multi-state organization, ELEC focuses on promoting economic development and advocating for investments in infrastructure -- not only to provide work opportunities but to ensure that our members, contractors and their families, have the quality of life they deserve as residents of New Jersey.

IUOE and contractors invest millions annually, host and operate two state-of-the-art training campuses and are making significant advancements and investments in STEM higher education for our members to keep up with equipment technology, software and hardware, internal computers, GPS and other advanced features, which will be required to build the energy of the future. As we plan the energy mix of the future, it is critical to keep in mind that organizations like ours have already begun putting the pieces in place to ensure our membership is up-to-date and ready to work.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.