

April 26, 2022



**Jewish  
Renaissance  
Foundation**

**“One People, One Heart”**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Jewish Renaissance Foundation (JRF) in support of the Community Solar Energy Program and its transition to a permanent program. Our organization is very familiar with community solar, and we helped subscribe Solar Landscape’s Perth Amboy projects – the first two community solar projects ever energized in New Jersey.

The JRF brings innovative ideas and culturally competent programs and services that focus on the social determinants of health to advance the well-being of all people as we work to address barriers to economic self-sufficiency. The JRF serves as both a Federally designated Community Action Agency administering a range of anti-poverty programs and a Qualified Health Center providing primary care at our Community Health Center (CHC) in Edison, NJ to those who have limited access to health care.

Community solar has already brought lower utility costs, air that is cleaner and workforce training to Middlesex County LMI residents. We want to ensure those benefits continue and recommend the following as part of our stakeholder feedback:

1. **The BPU should continue to award community solar projects through a competitive scoring process.** My organization has seen an extraordinary level of support (financial and otherwise) from solar companies as a direct result of the competition for my organization’s partnership to increase their score on their project applications. The families and communities we serve have benefited from discounts and other incentives to subscribe customers. We strongly feel changing to a first-come-first-served project-selection process would eliminate the substantial benefits of the competitive process.
2. **The BPU should award more community solar projects.** Community solar projects provide real, tangible benefits to my organization and those we work with, many who cannot take advantage of traditional residential solar (e.g., because they do not own their homes and/or live in buildings without suitable rooftops). Community solar is the best – and, in many cases, the only way for our families to secure the savings and other benefits of clean and green energy. We need more community solar!

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3. **The BPU should reduce barriers to low and moderate-income (LMI) subscribers.** Households that are LMI should be able to qualify as customers for community solar without having to jump through invasive hoops (e.g., proving that they are on food stamps). If a potential subscriber attests in writing that he or she is LMI, that should be enough. Asking for more deters residents from wanting to sign up for the community solar program.
  
4. **The BPU should require streamlining the billing process.** Community solar should be billed utilizing one bill. Our families often struggle to understand two different bills and therefore are unsure if they are receiving what was promised. Their PSE&G bill should reflect the savings and be the aggregate bill showing the benefit of their subscription to community solar.

Thank you for considering these comments. We look forward to continuing to promote clean energy equity in our community and work with our solar partner.

Sincerely,

*Sherri Goldberg*

Sherri Goldberg, Director of Community & Family Services