



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **New Study Identifies Best Strategies for States to Build Local Markets for Solar Electricity**

Montpelier, VT—Clean Energy Group and Peregrine Energy Group today released a new report that highlights policies and programs that states can implement to advance local solar photovoltaic (PV) markets. The report is based on a survey of the real-time experience of the leading state solar programs.

Today, states across the U.S. are taking the lead in supporting solar energy, recognizing this technology's environmental and economic benefits. States are moving aggressively to address the high first costs and market challenges facing solar technology. The report describes key policies and program strategies that have emerged as effective tools for states to advance wide-spread deployment of solar energy.

The report examines the effectiveness of specific activities that states are pursuing to address market barriers to the installation of PV. The report notes that states should target the solar cost items that they can affect most readily – so-called “non-hardware” costs, such as sales, installation, permitting, insurance, financing, and inspection, that can account for 50% or more of a system's cost.

The report notes that no single state policy or program is adequate in isolation to create a self-sufficient solar market. Therefore, states should consider employing a portfolio of policies and strategies to drive solar markets, and embrace innovative approaches and lessons learned from leading solar states like California, New Jersey, New York, Colorado, and Massachusetts.

Among the major recommendations detailed in the report:

- ***Provide Sustained Financial Support for Projects***—Recognize that PV markets cannot function successfully in the near future without predictable, long-term government incentives and financing support
- ***Establish “PV-Friendly” Laws and Regulations***—Pursue a comprehensive public policy agenda that includes expanded net metering, simplified interconnection standards, and renewable portfolio standard “set-asides” for solar technologies
- ***Ensure Sensible Program Design***—Develop solar incentive programs to avoid onerous program requirements that can drive up installer costs in the name of consumer protection
- ***Stimulate Long-Term Financing***—Facilitate creation of long-term, favorable solar financing programs
- ***Promote “PV-Friendly” Building Codes***—Promote standard building codes and permitting requirements that specifically and fairly address the characteristics and requirements of PV systems
- ***Walk the Talk***—Encourage a formal state government commitment to installing PV on public buildings
- ***Support Training***—Advance work force development by supporting installer training and certification programs to meet the demand for trained technicians
- ***Promote Education and Marketing***—Educate consumers and private lending institutions about the merits of PV technologies and pursue cooperative strategies to grow PV markets

The report also provides examples of specific state program offerings and policies that represent “best in class” approaches. It is hoped that states will use the report as a blueprint for actions that they can pursue to effectively mainstream solar electricity.

The study is titled ***Mainstreaming Solar Electricity: Strategies for States to Build Local Markets***, funded, in part, by the Department of Energy Solar America Initiative’s State Technical Outreach Project and is available from the States Advancing Solar web site at [www.statesadvancingsolar.org](http://www.statesadvancingsolar.org) or at [http://www.cleanegroup.org/Reports/CEG\\_Mainstreaming-Solar-Electricity\\_Apr2008.pdf](http://www.cleanegroup.org/Reports/CEG_Mainstreaming-Solar-Electricity_Apr2008.pdf)

The twelve states surveyed to inform the report are: California Energy Commission, Connecticut Clean Energy Fund, Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, Minnesota Department of Commerce, New Jersey BPU - Office of Clean Energy, New Mexico Energy Conservation and Management Division – NM Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department, NYSERDA, Ohio Energy Office, Energy Trust of Oregon, Sustainable Energy Fund of The Reinvestment Fund (PA) and Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corp., all of which are members of the Clean Energy States Alliance.

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