

SENATE No. 2161

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patrick M. O'Connor

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act providing solar energy to state agencies.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Patrick M. O'Connor

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Plymouth and Norfolk

SENATE No. 2161

By Mr. O'Connor, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2161) of Patrick M. O'Connor for legislation to provide solar energy to state agencies. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 2208 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act providing solar energy to state agencies.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 7C of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 29 the
2 following section:-

3 Section 29A. (a) As used in this section the following words shall have the following
4 meanings unless the context clearly requires otherwise:-

5 “Effective solar area,” the portion of a building roof on which the output from a solar
6 energy system, taking into account shading from existing permanent natural or manmade barriers
7 external to the building (including but not limited to trees, hills, and adjacent structures), would
8 be equivalent to 70 percent or greater of the output of an unshaded solar energy system on an
9 annual basis.

10 “Solar energy system”, any system that uses solar energy to provide all or a portion of the
11 electrical needs of a building.

12 “Substitute renewable energy system”, any system that uses renewable energy resources
13 other than solar energy to provide for all or a portion of the electrical needs of a building;
14 provided, that a renewable energy system shall use a technology eligible for the renewable
15 portfolio standard under subsection (c) of section 11F of chapter 25A of the General Laws.

16 (b) Beginning on January 1, 2024, the commissioner shall require a state agency that
17 initiates the construction of a new facility owned or operated by the commonwealth or a
18 renovation of an existing facility owned or operated by the commonwealth when the renovation
19 costs exceed \$25,000 and includes the replacement of systems, components or other building
20 elements which affect energy consumption to install a solar energy system on or near the facility.

21 (c) If the effective solar area is sufficiently large, the solar energy system shall produce
22 enough electricity on an annual basis to meet 100 percent of the projected annual electricity
23 demand of the building.

24 (d) If the effective solar area is insufficient to meet 100 percent of the building’s
25 projected annual electricity demand, the state agency shall either (1) install a solar energy system
26 occupying as much of the effective solar area as possible, or (2) install a ground-mounted solar
27 energy system, provided that the installation of a ground-mounted solar energy system does not
28 cause an unacceptable negative impact to the commonwealth’s natural or historic resources, and
29 provided that the solar energy system shall be sized to meet 100 percent of the building’s
30 projected annual electricity demand or the maximum possible given the available space.

31 (e) An agency may seek an exemption from the requirements of this section if the
32 effective solar area is less than 80 contiguous square feet and there is no suitable location for a
33 ground-mounted solar energy system.

34 (f) An agency may seek an exemption from the requirements of this section if a substitute
35 renewable energy system will be installed at the time of construction meeting 100 percent of the
36 building's projected annual electricity demand, or producing an equivalent amount of electricity
37 on an annual basis as the largest solar energy facility possible under subsection (d) of this
38 section. An agency may seek a reduction in the required size of a solar energy system upon a
39 sufficient showing that a substitute renewable energy system will be installed at the time of
40 construction, producing sufficient electricity on an annual basis to offset the reduction in
41 electricity produced by the solar energy system.