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/ Governor Sherrill Signs Legislation Giving New Jerseyans Cleaner, More Affordable Energy at Their Fingertips

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Latest Action Builds on Governor Sherrill’s Efforts to Expand Renewable Energy in New Jersey



TRENTON – Governor Mikie Sherrill today signed the Garden State Balcony Solar Act (S2368/A4836), removing unnecessary red tape that would prevent New Jerseyans from being able to purchase and use portable, plug-in solar panels to generate their own clean energy and lower their electricity costs.

"From day one, I’ve been laser-focused on driving down energy costs through an all-of-the-above approach, and that includes putting clean, affordable solar power that you can simply plug in directly into the hands of New Jerseyans," **said Governor Sherrill**. "Balcony solar is a practical, easy-to-use tool that can help families save money while allowing more people to participate in our clean energy future. This bill cuts unnecessary red tape, expands access to affordable solar power, and proves that affordability and sustainability can go hand in hand."

Balcony solar devices plug into a standard 120-volt outlet – as most units come with a microinverter and adapter – and provide electricity directly to a home’s existing electrical system, helping offset energy use and lowering costs. These devices, as well as the microinverter/adapter, are readily available for purchase online and in local home improvement stores.

The law exempts qualifying plug-in solar devices of up to 1,200 watts – roughly equivalent to the power used by a microwave oven – from utility interconnection and metering requirements, including certain fees, approvals, and equipment mandates. It also prevents landlords, homeowner associations, and similar entities from broadly prohibiting the use of these devices, while barring municipalities from prohibiting them or requiring permits for their use.

This action builds on Governor Sherrill’s aggressive energy agenda to lower costs for New Jerseyans. During her inaugural address, Governor Sherrill signed Executive Orders 1 and 2 to freeze rate hikes and accelerate new energy generation, particularly affordable, clean energy that can be deployed quickly. Since then, the Sherrill Administration has approved 18 new solar and battery storage projects, announced a historic expansion of community solar to 3,000 megawatts, signed legislation to hold data centers and utility companies accountable, as well as fast-tracking advanced grid technologies that will help cut costs. Together, these actions are estimated to save New Jersey ratepayers \$1 billion annually.

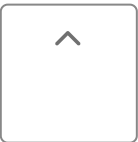
What They’re Saying

"The ‘Garden State Balcony Solar Act’ demonstrates that lowering utility costs for our residents and moving toward a greener future can go hand in hand," **said Senator John McKeon**. "With its signing today, we are greatly expanding access to plug-in solar, especially for renters and households without access to a private rooftop. By embracing innovative solutions like balcony solar, we can help households save on their utility bills and ensure the benefits of clean energy are accessible to all."

"We’ve been focused on helping New Jersey families lower their monthly energy bills, and plug-in solar devices will help us achieve that goal," **said Assemblyman Robert Karabinchak (D-Middlesex)**. "This new law will make it easier for households, including renters, to access affordable solar energy without having to install rooftop solar systems. This is another step we are taking to help our residents save on their electricity costs."

"New Jersey has been a national leader in solar for more than 20 years – this is a big victory for clean energy. Plug-in solar is a simple concept – solar small enough to plug in but big enough to provide real environmental and bill benefits for residents who couldn't go solar otherwise. Now is the time to make it as easy as possible for all residents across New Jersey – renters, apartment dwellers and home-owners – to go green by literally plugging into clean energy. We thank Gov. Sherrill for championing plug-in solar as part of her energy agenda to make it easier to bring clean energy to all," **said Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey**.

"Plug-in solar gives New Jersey families another tool to lower their energy costs while expanding access to clean, homegrown energy. By making it easier for renters and homeowners alike to take advantage of solar, the Garden State Balcony Solar Act will help make our clean energy transition more affordable, accessible, and equitable," **said Jesse Sutherland, Political and Policy Director, of New Jersey LCV**. "We are proud to support Governor Sherrill's leadership in expanding access to clean energy for all New Jerseyans."



congratulate Governor Sherrill, Senator McKeon, and Assemblyman Calabrese on this important step forward, and thank them for their leadership in making clean energy more accessible to all New Jerseyans."

"By making solar more accessible, New Jersey is building a fairer, more affordable energy system where everyone can share in the benefits of clean power," **said Elowyn Corby, Senior Regional Director for the Mid-Atlantic, Vote Solar Action Fund.** "We are grateful Governor Sherrill has stood with New Jersey families and taken a major step toward a clean energy future that delivers greater energy affordability and access to solar."

"Plug-in solar can save a family hundreds of dollars a year, every year, with no cost to the ratepayers," **said Hannah Birnbaum, Co-Founder and Chief of Advocacy at Permit Power.** "Governor Sherrill has been going after energy costs since her first day in office, and this law hands families a tool they can use themselves, including the roughly 40 percent of New Jerseyans who rent or live in apartments and have never had a way to lower their own power bill."

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