

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Celebrates Earth Week by Laying Out New Landmark Solar Investments, Putting New Jersey One Step Closer to Achieving 100% Clean Electricity by 2035

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Governor Joined by Advocates, Community Stakeholders, Labor Leaders to Mark New Advancements in Solar Affordability and Accessibility

\$156 Million U.S. EPA Award to Benefit 22,000 Low-Income Households

State's Largest Solar Award to Date Will Transform Contaminated Sites, Support Environmental Justice

Upcoming Solar Awards and Grid Modernization Project Will Boost Clean Energy Capacity

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today celebrated the culmination of Earth Week by unveiling a slew of new solar initiatives that will boost accessibility across the board and make solar more affordable for residents than ever before, bolstering New Jersey's momentum and reaffirming its commitment to achieve 100 percent clean electricity by 2035.

New Jersey already expects to surpass 200,000 solar installations in the next month – more than half of which have been added during the Murphy Administration – and five gigawatts of installed solar capacity this year.

"Earth Week is not just a time for reflection or contemplation. It is a time for action. It is a time to take bold steps in caring for our environment and advocating for our neighbors who have endured generations of environmental injustice," **said Governor Murphy**. "New Jersey is all in on clean energy. We are on track this year to procure more solar than ever before, which will help us hit all of our solar goals, and more importantly, make solar energy more affordable and accessible than ever before while righting many wrongs of the past."

Joined by environmental advocates, elected officials, and community and labor leaders, the Governor announced five major investments in clean energy that will ultimately enable New Jersey to meet its goal of reducing emissions by 80 percent by 2050.

The first investment, awarded to New Jersey this week by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is \$156.1 million through the Solar For All competition, which is part of the historic \$27 billion Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund created under President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act.

The funding will be leveraged to support impactful solar programs that enable low-income and disadvantaged communities to benefit from clean energy by supporting solar access for multi-family affordable housing, establishing pathways to residential solar ownership for low-income households, expanding community solar initiatives, supporting solar workforce development, and enabling critical grid upgrades to support more solar generation in New Jersey.

New Jersey's Solar for All award is anticipated to deliver approximately 175 megawatts of solar energy to benefit 22,000 low-income households within the first five years of funding, resulting in approximately \$250 million in total energy bill savings over 30 years for residents in newly connected households. Additionally, the award is expected to

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result in CO₂ emission reductions of 240,000 short tons and enable 90 megawatt-hours of energy storage associated with multi-family housing.

The federal Solar For All program was developed through extensive engagement with key environmental, environmental justice, economic development, labor, and other stakeholder groups.

New Jersey received the highest amount awarded to states in its category.

“President Biden has delivered the largest investment in climate action and clean energy in history, with unprecedented support to help all Americans benefit from lower energy costs and healthier communities,” said **Assistant to President Biden and White House National Climate Advisor Ali Zaidi**. “Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, we are deploying \$7 billion in grants that will deliver residential solar projects to over 900,000 households nationwide, including low-income households in New Jersey. This Solar for All award is the latest way that the Biden-Harris Administration is partnering with Governor Murphy to help New Jersey families benefit from the electric bill savings, good-paying jobs, and cleaner air that come with residential solar access.”

The Governor today also detailed a sizable solar investment awarded last week by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPUB) that will create 310 megawatts of grid-scale solar and the first state-incentivized energy storage project in New Jersey. This award marks the first successful solicitation of New Jersey’s new Competitive Solar Incentive Program (<https://njcleanenergy.com/renewable-energy/programs/susi-program/csi-program>), and the largest solicitation award to date in any New Jersey solar program, following several record years in New Jersey for solar capacity installation.

Among the awards is a 95-megawatt project, which would be the largest solar project in New Jersey, by far, at the lowest cost per megawatt to ratepayers. The awards also include solar projects that will transform contaminated sites or landfills, a major redevelopment and environmental justice priority of the Murphy Administration.

Equally important, this latest solicitation will cut the cost for SREC IIs (Solar Renewable Energy Certificates) by more than half, ultimately lowering the costs for ratepayers.

“The NJBPUB thanks the Biden Administration and Governor Murphy for their continued leadership and investment in affordable and accessible clean energy for all,” said **NJBPUB President Christine Guhl-Sadovy**. “From our highly successful Competitive Solar Incentive Program to our nation-leading Community Solar Energy Program, the NJBPUB is supporting the development of projects that produce significant environmental benefits and savings for New Jersey ratepayers.”

As part of the Murphy Administration’s multi-pronged approach to develop reliable clean energy, the Governor proposed \$40 million in his Fiscal Year 2025 budget – \$15 million in State funds and \$25 million from the Clean Energy Fund – to provide State matching funds to leverage millions in federal grant dollars for electric grid modernization to enable clean energy interconnection and support a strong union workforce. Additionally, these grants could support the innovative development of comprehensive and regional resilience strategies to address threats to the state’s power system infrastructure, prevent outages, enhance the resilience of the electric grid, and deploy state of the art technologies to enhance grid flexibility.

The Governor today also highlighted the recently announced 225 megawatts of community solar and the re-opening of the Community Solar Energy Program for an additional 275 megawatts, which is being considered by the NJBPUB Board on April 30. Through the permanent Community Solar Energy Program, New Jersey expects to see higher rates of solar project completion, increased low-to-moderate income household participation, decreased energy burdens for residents, increased municipal or public entity involvement, and continued siting of solar projects primarily on the built environment and contaminated lands.

The Governor also announced that the NJBPUB is anticipated to launch the Dual-Use Solar Pilot Program this summer, which looks to award up to 200 megawatts of solar capacity combined with active agricultural or horticultural production.

“With the launch of this project, New Jersey continues to lead the charge toward a sustainable clean energy future,” said **Senator Bob Smith, Senate Environment and Energy Committee Chair**. “This project not only harnesses clean energy but empowers communities, providing more accessibility to sustainable power for all residents in our state.”

“I am excited to see New Jersey moving towards our energy goals while sharing the success with our residents by opening this landmark community solar field, one of the largest in the State,” said **Assemblyman Wayne P. DeAngelo, Chair of the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee**. “It is crucial that we keep

affordability at the core of our transition to generating our own clean energy. By giving ratepayers the chance to opt in to the program, we are helping them save today while investing in a cleaner future.”

“This Earth Week, and every week, the Murphy Administration is hard at work moving New Jersey toward an affordable clean energy future that improves the air quality for our children while combatting our worsening climate crisis,” **said Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette, NJ Department of Environmental Protection.** “This and future generations will benefit from the changemaking work to expand equitable access to renewable solar energy that President Christine Guhl-Sadovy and her team at the Board of Public Utilities are advancing here in Berkeley Township and all across the Garden State.”

The Governor made these announcements in Berkeley Township, Ocean County, where CS Energy’s new Eagle Solar I and II community solar projects are nearing completion. The 10 MW projects will power approximately 1,600 homes across the region while providing a 20% discount to all subscribers, including 51% low and moderate income (LMI) customers, a move that is expected to produce annual household savings of more than \$200 and just under \$7 million over the 20-year lifetime of the project for all 1,600 homes.

The first phase of the massive undertaking saw the 40-acre landfill closed and capped after roughly 40 years, at no cost to the township, representing the first time that state community solar incentives were leveraged by a solar developer to finance the closure of a former landfill. This paved the way for construction of the solar project – one of the two largest community solar projects in New Jersey – which was made possible, in large part, by support from NJBPU and collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the New Jersey Pinelands Commission.

“This project achieves many goals in Berkeley Township, which include the final capping of our long-closed landfill, providing green energy to our residents at a discounted rate, and improving the environment by reducing our carbon footprint,” **said Berkeley Township Mayor John Bacchione.** “I would like to thank New Jersey’s Board of Public Utilities, Department of Environmental Protection, and Pinelands Commission, as well as Eagle Solar I and II for the opportunity to move forward with this clean energy project.”

This project sets a new standard for sustainable development and public-private partnership,” **said Eric Millard, CS Energy Chief Commercial Officer.** “Using the development of community solar, which delivers discounted electricity to working families, we were able to remediate a landfill that was untouched for more than 40 years. With Governor Murphy’s continued leadership we look forward to replicating this successful model throughout New Jersey.

The Governor was joined in force by members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 400, who were a major contributor to the Eagle I and II projects, along with the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA!) Local 172 and 472, the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 825, and Ironworkers Local 399.

“Local 400 and its members would like to thank Luminace, CS Energy and Scholes Electric for providing work opportunities for the men and women of Monmouth and Ocean Counties,” **said Robert Shimko, IBEW Local 400 Business Manager.** “I would especially like to thank Governor Murphy for his leadership and vision for a greener NJ. Eagle I and II Solar fields will allow NJ to get closer to the 100% clean energy goal by 2035.”

“For the 20,000 Laborers who work in and call New Jersey home, the investment in renewable energy infrastructure is not only good for the environment and the state as a whole, it is also good for all of those individual families who benefit from the good-paying jobs being created,” **said Michael E Hellstrom, Vice President and Eastern Regional Manager, Laborers International Union of NA (LIUNA).** “For my union, the Laborers’ International Union of North America (LIUNA), our training and apprenticeship programs continue to adapt to new industries and the new challenges related to climate change. We are proud to build a better New Jersey by building better.”

“We are proud to support transformative energy projects like Eagle Solar I and II. These initiatives mark significant strides toward building a clean, sustainable energy future for our state. Also, by focusing on innovative solutions such as grid modernization and community solar programs, New Jersey is not just investing in infrastructure but is also laying the foundation for generations of good-paying, union jobs,” **said Greg Lalevee, Business Manager of IUOE Local 825 & IUOE General Vice President.** “We are grateful for Governor Murphy’s visionary approach, and excited to be a part of these projects that promise a brighter future for our members and all New Jersey residents.”

“The New Jersey Sierra Club is extremely pleased to see solar power and clean energy become more accessible to all residents across the state,” **said Anjuli Ramos-Busot, Sierra Club NJ Chapter Director.** “Our access to clean energy sources should never depend on zip-code, and this funding will help ensure that working class and low-income families and disadvantaged communities are not left behind. We thank the Biden Administration, the Murphy

Administration and the Solar For All Program for taking the necessary steps to jointly tackle climate change and energy justice. Our just transition towards a transformed clean energy economy must be inclusive, and this funding will ensure that folks in New Jersey can all be a part of that brighter and safer future.”

“Thanks to Governor Murphy’s leadership the state continues to show an ongoing commitment to a 100% clean energy future with the BPU approval of 300 MW of affordable clean solar projects across the state. In addition to the savings solar brings, it can also provide family-sustaining jobs for those who want to transition into new careers in the clean energy economy,” **said Ed Potosnak, Executive Director, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters.** “Solar has the potential to meet 30-40% of energy capacity needs in New Jersey by 2050. This clean, renewable energy doesn’t pollute the air like dirty fossil fuels, helps mitigate climate change and create healthier communities, and provides financial savings for residents who live with energy insecurity.”

“Community solar commitments bring New Jersey ever closer to a sustainable clean energy future. These projects achieve goals of affordability, local jobs, and energy assistance for some of our most vulnerable populations,” **said Nicole Miller, Clean Energy Jobs Coalition NJ and New Jersey Progressive Equitable Energy Coalition.** “As New Jersey considers new energy opportunities, our leaders must commit to projects that reduce co-pollutants, improve air quality, ease the energy burden for low-income households, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure thousands of life-sustaining jobs for New Jerseyans. This is a standard that should not be compromised.”

“Solar energy is critical to the clean energy revolution. Governor Murphy continues to demonstrate his leadership in tackling the climate crisis, creating cleaner air, and lowering energy bills,” said Donna De Costanzo, Northeast Regional Director for Climate & Energy at NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council). *“This administration has a tremendous opportunity to increase deployment of renewable resources and enact a nation-leading 100% by 2035 Clean Energy Standard this year.”*

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