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NEW JERSEY BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

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NJBPU Unveils Application Process for New Statewide Pilot Community Solar Program

TRENTON—The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today approved the application process for year one of the State’s new three-year Community Solar Energy Pilot Program, a key component of Governor Phil Murphy’s clean energy agenda. The new application process follows the [Board’s January 17 adoption](#) of the three-year Community Solar Energy Pilot Program Rules.

The Pilot Program, which will generate crucial market information and implementation data, will ultimately inform the development of a permanent community solar program over the next three years. In developing the Pilot, staff created an innovative and flexible program that the Board may evaluate and adjust over the life of the program in order to maximize the program’s success.

“Environmental justice has been one of my top priorities since I launched my campaign for Governor,” said Governor Murphy. “Establishing the Community Solar Pilot Program ensures that all New Jersey residents regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, or community in which they live, can take advantage of the opportunities that clean energy provides.”

“Not only will this program help combat climate change by expanding the use of renewable energy in our state, but it will also allow many more residents to reap the benefits of solar, particularly those with low- or moderate-incomes,” said NJBPU President Joseph L. Fiordaliso.

“Now you don’t necessarily need solar panels on your own roof to be able to power your home with solar energy.”

To ensure that New Jerseyans have more equitable access to solar energy, the Pilot Program will earmark 40 percent of the overall program capacity for low- and moderate-income projects.

The application form outlines the requirements for projects within the pilot program, including a criteria rubric by which applications will be evaluated and ranked for selection by the Board. New Jersey is the first state ever to utilize an evaluation rubric for its community solar program, as opposed to a first come, first served process. The rubric will ensure an intentional selection approach and fair access to the program among diverse solar vendors and project types and help maximize the State's learning from the Pilot program.

The application process will open on April 9, 2019, at 9 a.m. and close on September 9, 2019, at 5 p.m. After the application window closes, a dedicated evaluation committee will review each administratively complete application within 60 days and score them based on the application form's evaluation criteria, which include:

- Low- and moderate-income and environmental justice inclusion (30 points max.);
- Siting – with priority given to landfills, brownfields, areas of historic fill, rooftops, parking lots, and parking decks (20 points max., with a potential five-point bonus for landscaping, land enhancement, pollination support, storm water management, soil conservation, and/or decommissioning plans);
- Product offering (15 points max., with priority given to those that guarantee savings of greater than 10 percent);
- Community and environmental justice engagement (10 points max.);
- Subscribers (10 points max., with priority given to projects with a majority of residential subscribers);
- Other benefits (10 points max., with priority given to projects providing local jobs, job training or demonstration of co-benefits such as paired with storage or a microgrid project); and
- Geographic limit within EDC service territory (five points max., with priority given to projects with subscribers in the same municipality or an adjacent municipality to the project's location).

Projects must receive at least 30 points to be considered for participation in the Pilot Program. Projects that receive more than 30 points will be awarded capacity in the Pilot Program in order, starting with the highest-scoring project and proceeding to the lowest-scoring project.

The Community Solar Energy Pilot Program has an annual capacity limit of 75 megawatts (MW) for the first year, and at least 75 MW for the second and third years (roughly estimated to cover the electric usage of 45,000 residential homes over three years). It supports Governor Murphy's commitment of 100 percent clean energy by 2050, including 3,500 MW of offshore wind energy by 2030 and solar initiatives such as community solar and a revamped, more cost-effective solar energy program.

For more information go to www.njcleanenergy.com

About the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBP)

The NJBP is a state agency and regulatory authority mandated to ensure safe, adequate and proper utility services at reasonable rates for New Jersey customers. Critical services regulated by the NJBP include natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications and cable television. The Board has general oversight and

responsibility for monitoring utility service, responding to consumer complaints, and investigating utility accidents. To find out more about the NJBPU, visit our web site at www.nj.gov/bpu.

About the New Jersey Clean Energy Program (NJCEP)

The NJCEP, established on January 22, 2003, in accordance with the Electric Discount and Energy Competition Act (EDECA), provides financial and other incentives to the State's residential customers, businesses and schools that install high-efficiency or renewable energy technologies, thereby reducing energy usage, lowering customers' energy bills and reducing environmental impacts. The program is authorized and overseen by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), and its website is www.NJCleanEnergy.com.