

Solar for All: Increasing Access to Solar in Low-Income Communities

MADRI Working Group
Baltimore, MD

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VOTE SOLAR

Vote Solar is a non-profit organization working to make solar a mainstream energy resource across the U.S.

We target state-level opportunities for change through a combination of:



Regulatory Participation



Direct Policymaker Education



Local & Diverse Advocacy Partnership



Technical Analysis, Tools & Resources



Public Communications
& Grassroots Engagement

Decreased Costs +
Increased Access =
Solar Scale



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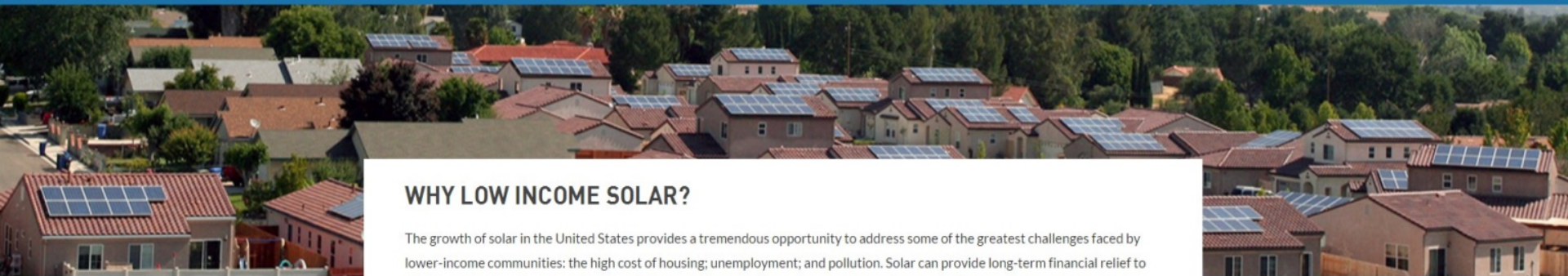
Low-Income Solar Policy Guide:



LowIncomeSolar.org

LOW INCOME **SOLAR POLICY GUIDE**

[WHY ACT](#) [GUIDING PRINCIPLES](#) [POLICY TOOLS](#) [SUCCESSFUL MODELS](#)



WHY LOW INCOME SOLAR?

The growth of solar in the United States provides a tremendous opportunity to address some of the greatest challenges faced by lower-income communities: the high cost of housing; unemployment; and pollution. Solar can provide long-term financial relief to families struggling with high and unpredictable energy costs, living-wage employment opportunities in an industry adding jobs at a rate of 20% per year, and a source of clean, local energy... [\[Read more\]](#)



Why Act?



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- » Energy burden
- » Health issues
- » Susceptibility to natural disasters

Why Act?



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- » Financial Relief
- » Employment Opportunities
- » Healthier, More Empowered Communities
- » Sustainable and Equitable Transition to Clean Energy

Guiding Principles:



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All low-income solar programs should adopt the following basic principles:

- Accessibility & Affordability
- Community Partnership
- Consumer Protection
- Long-term Sustainability & Flexibility
- Complementary to Other Programs





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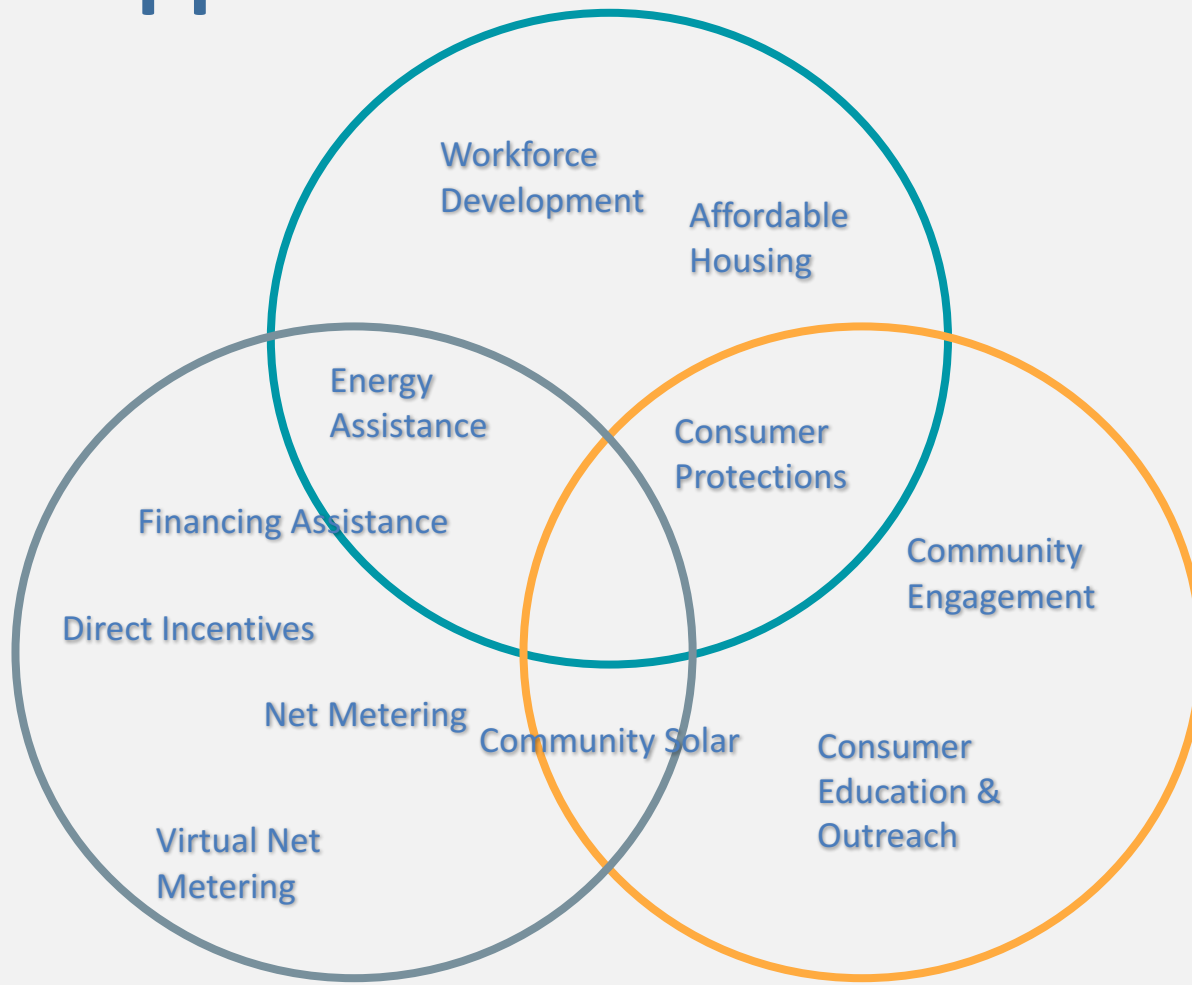
Barriers & Policy Solutions

Physical & Locational Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community solar• Virtual net metering
Financial Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct incentives, eg rebates, renewable energy credits• On-bill recovery, net metering• Green Banks, CDFIs• Integration with job training, energy assistance, etc.
Education & Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnerships with trusted community organizations• Funding for community outreach and education• Education for social services providers• Consumer protections
Market Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financing assistance• Technical assistance• Streamlined methodologies and processes

Holistic Approach



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Trends in Low-Income Solar Policy



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- » Increasing interest in community solar, with special, supportive programming for low-income customers (CO, IL, MA)
- » Direct incentives for low-income solar deployment (CA, DC, MA)
- » Workforce development programs (CA, DC, IL)
- » Community engagement (IL, NY)
- » Financing solutions (CT, MA)



More Policy Development Needed:

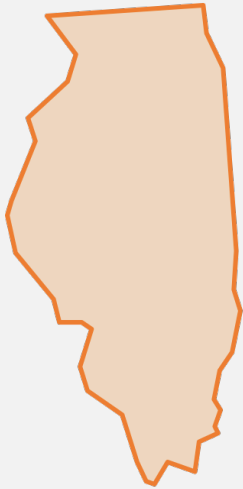
- Customer Acquisition and Management
- Financing Challenges
- Community Ownership
- Multifamily Affordable Housing



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Illinois Solar for All Program

- Created by SB 2814 of 2016
- Contains essential elements of a good low-income solar program
- **Accessibility and Affordability:**
 - Offers meaningful financial incentives
 - Requires low-income community participation
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Requires community solar developers to engage in partnership with community-based organizations
 - Funds community-based organizations to perform grassroots education
- **Sustainability and Flexibility**
 - Includes sustained funding
 - Opportunities for program review and adjustment
- **Compatibility and Integration:**
 - Includes job training
 - Integrates solar with energy efficiency



How Can We Work Together?



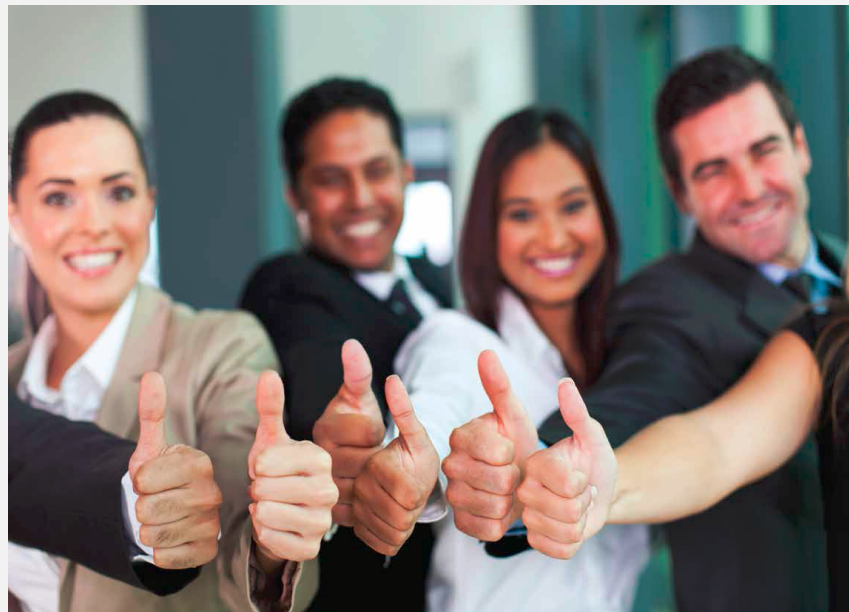
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LowIncomeSolar.org

- » A tool for policy makers and advocates to increase access to solar

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- » A resource for policy and technical assistance



Thank you!

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