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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

## **GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES THREE GIGAWATTS OF SOLAR INSTALLED IN NEW YORK GENERATING ENOUGH CLEAN ENERGY TO POWER MORE THAN HALF A MILLION HOMES**

State's Solar Growth Up Over 2,100 Percent and Cost of Solar Down 69% Since Launch of NY-Sun Initiative

Completed Solar Across the State Plus Projects Awarded and Under Development Represent 95% of Governor Cuomo's Goal to Deploy Six Gigawatts of Solar by 2025

[Photos Available Here](#)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced three gigawatts of solar have been installed across the state, enough to power more than half a million homes, underscoring New York's leadership in growing one of the strongest solar markets in the nation. Since the launch of the NY-Sun initiative in 2011, solar has grown 2,100 percent statewide and declined in cost by 69 percent while fostering approximately 12,000 jobs across the state. When combined with the projects that are under development, achieving today's milestone represents 95 percent of Governor Cuomo's goal to install six gigawatts of solar by 2025, as mandated in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

"Solar energy is a key component in New York's transition to a clean energy economy as we work to reduce harmful emissions across the board and address the dual challenges of fighting climate change and rebuilding stronger post-pandemic," Governor Cuomo said. "The success of NY-Sun demonstrates we are on track to meeting our nation-leading energy goals while stimulating green job growth and economic recovery in communities across the state as part of our comprehensive plan to reimagine New York following the pandemic."

"As someone who grew up near Lake Erie and saw first-hand the harmful effects caused by emissions from the local steel plant, creating a cleaner, greener future has always been a personal fight for me," Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul said. "By reaching the historic milestone of three gigawatts of solar installed in New York, we can now power more than a half million homes with clean energy, while also creating good jobs and attracting further investment in our State's green energy economy."

Lieutenant Governor Hochul made the announcement today with NYSERDA President and CEO Doreen M. Harris and Peggy Flannery, Principal at Generate Capital, at a ribbon cutting for the largest community solar project in the Mid-Hudson region. The project, informally known as "17B", located in the town of Bethel on the road leading to the site of the original 1969 Woodstock Music

Festival, was developed by Delaware River Solar, and is owned by Generate Capital, which jointly manage the site today. It includes a 6.1 megawatt solar array that will produce 7.8 million kilowatt-hours of solar energy annually, and is fully subscribed with 129 residences, small businesses, and non-profits. The project received over \$1 million from NYSERDA through the NY-Sun initiative.

By enabling consumers to subscribe to a local community solar project, this project will increase access to solar for homeowners and renters who may not have ideal conditions to directly install solar panels onsite. Through community solar arrangements, energy is still delivered by a customer's regular electric provider, and the power produced from the community solar array is fed directly back to the electric grid. As the electric grid is supplied with clean, renewable energy, subscribers receive credit on their electric bills for their portion of the community solar system.

In 2020, New York ranked first in the nation in Community Solar installations and second for total installations. Last year was also the State's most productive year ever for these solar installations, with 549 megawatts of capacity installed, the majority of which was supported by NY-Sun incentives. New York's policies have ensured solar reaches every county in the state with Long Island, Mid-Hudson, and the Capital Region with the most installed solar.

Since 2011, Governor Cuomo's NY-Sun initiative achieved the following:

- Installed solar on the rooftop or property of 145,000 homes spanning every county in New York;
- Provided over \$1 billion in incentives, leveraging \$5.3 billion in private investment;
- Drove over 2,100 percent solar growth in the State;
- Delivered enough clean, renewable energy to power over 522,000 New York homes;
- Fostered 12,000 jobs in the solar industry;
- Helped to drive down the cost of solar 69 percent in 10 years; and
- Committed \$30 million for projects benefiting environmental justice and disadvantaged communities.

NYSERDA President and CEO Doreen M. Harris said, "The NY-Sun initiative has made New York's solar market a national leader by providing the market signals and support needed to expand access to clean, affordable energy for all New Yorkers. Public-private partnerships are a cornerstone of our work, and we are incredibly proud of our collaboration with the stakeholders, developers, and landowners that have helped us achieve our three gigawatts of solar milestone, an important step on the path to greening our energy grid as part of the State's equitable clean energy transition."

"Community solar is a critical opportunity to democratize access to affordable clean energy and we are thrilled to congratulate New York State on reaching this 3GW deployment milestone," said Peggy Flannery, a principal at Generate Capital, which has more than 200 MW of community solar projects under ownership or in construction in New York State today. "At Generate, our vision is to rebuild the world with sustainable infrastructure and we're proud to partner with innovative developers like Delaware River Solar to bring the clean power, jobs and economic savings opportunities from community solar projects to thousands of communities, residents and small businesses throughout the state."

David Gahl, Senior Director of State Policy, East, at Solar Energy Industries Association, said, "This three-gigawatt milestone is an impressive accomplishment and testament to New York's strong commitment to solar. The solar industry supports more than 10,000 jobs in the state, and programs like the NY-Sun initiative will help continue to generate investments and job opportunities as we work toward reaching the short and long-term goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. SEIA looks forward to continuing our productive collaboration with NYSERDA and state leaders to keep solar working for New York's economy and environment."

Shyam Mehta, Executive Director of New York Solar Energy Industries Association, said, "NYSEIA and its member companies appreciate the vision and hard work of the Public Service Commission, the Department of Public Service, NYSERDA, the State Legislature, and Governor Cuomo and his administration in setting up New York's distributed solar industry for success over the past decade. In the process, New York has become a national clean energy, solar, and environmental justice leader, especially through development of its community solar program. We look forward to working with state authorities to ensure the continued health of the distributed solar industry and decarbonization of our economy in the years to come."

Kaitlin Kelly O'Neill, northeast regional director for the Coalition for Community Solar Access, said, "The growth of the distributed and community solar market in New York has been an incredible success story. Thanks to the leadership and vision of NYSERDA, we have expanded access to the benefits of affordable, clean energy to hundreds of thousands of additional customers across the state and we are creating a more just and equitable electric grid that works for all New Yorkers."

Senator Kevin Parker, Chair, Senate Energy Committee said, "I applaud Governor Cuomo and NYSERDA for their latest initiative which will provide more than half a million homes with solar power. As we continue to follow the mandates of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act) I know our state will not only work to install more solar panels but additionally provide more job opportunity for New Yorkers, which is a critical component as we get through this pandemic."

Assembly Member Michael Cusick, Chair, Assembly Energy Committee said, "Today marks a promising milestone in our statewide efforts to transition to a green energy grid and combat climate change. We have now reached half of our statewide solar power goal and with projects already in progress we are well on our way to achieving our goal of six gigawatts of solar power by 2025. I am glad that today's announcement was made at one of the state's largest community solar project sites. With the help of my colleagues in the energy committee I was able to pass a bill (A3805) in Albany this year which will greatly expand access to community solar projects for people across New York State."

Assembly Member Aileen Gunther said, "I am happy to see that the largest community solar project in the Mid-Hudson Region has been completed in Bethel. The Town of Bethel has always been at the forefront of sustainability and green energy, and this project will help to advance New York State's green energy goals. We know there is an urgent need for climate-friendly energy sources. We're seeing the devastating impact of climate change all across our country every day. I look forward building upon this successful project and working to ensure that Sullivan County continues to lead the way to a cleaner and brighter future."

Town of Bethel Supervisor Daniel Sturm said, "Bethel is proud to host this announcement of NYS' accomplishments as a solar energy leader. This community solar array—the largest in the Mid-Hudson region—is an outgrowth of our town's own leadership. In 2017, Bethel's Town Board enacted a widely-praised solar energy law to encourage roof-top and ground mounted solar installations while being protective of property rights and our area's scenic beauty. And as both a

Bronze-certified Climate Smart Community and designated Clean Energy Community, the Town of Bethel continues to work closely with NYSERDA on projects large and small to advance our own and the State's sustainability goals."

In addition to the three gigawatts of distributed solar installed statewide, there is another 2.7 gigawatts of solar that have been awarded NY-Sun incentives and are now under development across the state. These projects are expected to come online in the next two years with enough capacity to power an additional 477,000 homes, which will bring New York State even closer to achieving the six gigawatts target mandated in the Climate Act. Currently, New York's statewide solar pipeline is comprised of over 90 percent community solar, or more than 800 projects, which once completed will expand access to more New Yorkers including low-to-moderate income households.

This strong pipeline of distributed solar projects is complemented by NYSERDA's large-scale renewables program, which has active contracts with over 75 utility-scale solar projects totaling nearly five additional gigawatts of solar under development including several actively in construction throughout the state - enough to power more than 1.2 million homes once completed. Together, these projects will result in more than \$5.5 billion invested in New York and over 9,000 jobs in development, construction, and operations and maintenance.

### New York State's Nation-Leading Climate Plan

Governor Cuomo's nation-leading climate agenda is the most aggressive climate and clean energy initiative in the nation, calling for an orderly and just transition to clean energy that creates jobs and continues fostering a green economy as New York State recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Enshrined into law through the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, New York is on a path to achieve its mandated goal of a zero-emission electricity sector by 2040, including 70 percent renewable energy generation by 2030, and to reach economy wide carbon neutrality. It builds on New York's unprecedented investments to ramp-up clean energy including over \$21 billion in 91 large-scale renewable projects across the state, \$6.8 billion to reduce buildings emissions, \$1.8 billion to scale up solar, more than \$1 billion for clean transportation initiatives, and over \$1.2 billion in NY Green Bank commitments. Combined, these investments are supporting more than 150,000 jobs in New York's clean energy sector in 2019, a 2,100 percent growth in the distributed solar sector since 2011 and a commitment to develop 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind by 2035. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York will build on this progress and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent from 1990 levels by 2050, while ensuring that at least 35 percent with a goal of 40 percent of the benefits of clean energy investments are directed to disadvantaged communities, and advance progress towards the state's 2025 energy efficiency target of reducing on-site energy consumption by 185 trillion BTUs of end-use energy savings.

### About NYSERDA

NYSERDA, a public benefit corporation, offers objective information and analysis, innovative programs, technical expertise, and funding to help New Yorkers increase energy efficiency, save money, use renewable energy, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. NYSERDA professionals work to protect the environment and create clean-energy jobs. NYSERDA has been developing partnerships to advance innovative energy solutions in New York State since 1975. To learn more about NYSERDA's programs and funding opportunities, visit [nyserdera.ny.gov](http://nyserdera.ny.gov) or follow us on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or Instagram.