



September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Chairman McCann, Vice Chair McDonald Rivet, Vice Chair Lauwers and members of the Senate Energy & Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

I am one of the Co-Founders of Fieldworks Power, a community-scale solar developer. Our team has previous experience developing and operating community solar projects across the country, and with the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act we see a tremendous opportunity to bring the benefits of community solar to new states like Michigan. If the foundation for a true community solar program is established, we would invest significantly in developing community solar projects that would bring real savings, jobs, grid upgrades, community benefits and economic benefits<sup>1</sup> to your state.

As it stands, we are concerned that the current version of SB 271 would not give us the foundation to start truly investing in Michigan as we had hoped. While the current language discusses establishing a community solar program, the legislative foundation that makes it possible for us to work in this state is missing.

What we need is language that enables the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to establish a viable community solar program that developers like Fieldworks Power can operate in. In particular, we need:

- A sufficient program size to allow us to prioritize our investment in Michigan
- Direction for the MPSC to establish a bill credit rate that adequately values the impact these distributed projects bring to the grid and subscribers.
- Consumer protection and subscriber guidelines – for example the direction to serve a sufficient proportion of low-to-moderate income subscribers.
- A clear and fair process for interconnecting to the distribution grid
- The establishment of utility tariffs that enable the benefits from our projects to be delivered on customers' electric bills.

The benefits of community solar are significant, especially when there's an opportunity to leverage unprecedented federal incentives. Beyond the Solar for All funding, there is also the "Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program" which can enable an additional 20% investment tax credit (ITC) bonus for community solar projects that deliver substantial savings to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canr.msu.edu/cea/uploads/files/Com Solar Report Final Edits.pdf>

low-to-moderate income customers. **As written, we do not believe that SB 271 would set Michigan up to take advantage of these significant opportunities.**

We are members of both the Coalition for Community Solar Access (CCSA) and the Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council (EIBC) and we echo all the points they will make in their testimony on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We hope there is still room to set the foundation for a true community solar program in Michigan so that we can develop projects that will deliver access and savings to so many who need it.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

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