SENATE DOCKET, NO. 751 FILED ON: 1/14/2025

SENATE . . . . . No. 2240

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Cynthia Stone Creem

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to promote low-income access to solar.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Cynthia Stone Creem	*Norfolk and Middlesex*

SENATE DOCKET, NO. 751 FILED ON: 1/14/2025

SENATE . . . . . No. 2240

By Ms. Creem, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2240) of Cynthia Stone Creem relative to promote low-income access to solar. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. *2094* OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to promote low-income access to solar.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 164 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 149. (a) The department of energy resources shall ensure equity, accessibility, and promote participation by renters and low-income retail electric customers in the solar incentive program established in section 11 of chapter 75 of the acts of 2016, and in any successor solar incentive program, by implementing a low-income customer verification process in which low income customers shall be persons whose income is at or below 80 percent of the area median income or 200 percent of the federal poverty level or is a small business, who are, for the purposes of this section defined as business entities, including their affiliates that are (i) independently owned and operated; and (ii) are defined as a “small business” under applicable

11 federal law, as established in the United States Code and promulgated from time to time by the
12 United States Small Business Administration.

13 (b) A low-income multi-unit building that meets the definition under M.G.L. c. 40B, § 20
14 or otherwise receives tax credits under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
15 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program shall qualify as one low-income customer.

16 (c) In the implementation of the program, the department shall:

17 (i) Require income data verification to determine eligibility for low-income customers.
18 Proof of eligibility required for low-income customers shall include one or more than one of the
19 following: proof of participation in a low income discount program including Medicaid;
20 Supplemental Security Income; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Women, Infants, and
21 Children Nutrition Program; Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program; Supplemental
22 Nutrition Assistance Program; Head Start; National School Lunch Program; Emergency Aid to
23 the Elderly, Disabled, and Children; School Breakfast Program; public housing; Transitional
24 Aide to Families with Dependent Children; Veterans' Service Benefits established in Chapter
25 115; Veterans Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Surviving Parent or Spouse; Veterans
26 Non-Service Disability Pension; Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program or other fuel
27 assistance; or proof that the residential low-income customer lives in or is a business entity
28 located in a Census block group where the median household income is at or below 200 percent
29 of the U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines or 80 percent of the area median gross income published
30 by the United States Census Bureau, whichever is greater; by living in or owning a low-income
31 multi-unit building, including those that are master-metered; or proof of income of the account
32 holder including pay stubs or form W-2; or any verification method authorized by the U.S.

33 Department of the Treasury for the qualified low-income economic benefit project Investment
34 Tax Credit adder under United States Public Law 117-169 Section 13103(2)(C);

35 (ii) prohibit credit checks as a means of establishing eligibility for residential customers
36 to become a subscriber;

37 (iii) prohibit the use of early termination and exit fees for residential customers;

38 (iv) require distribution companies generating an alternative form of on-bill credits as
39 approved by the department of public utilities from distributed solar generation facilities to
40 accept and implement no less frequently than once per month any changes to the identities of
41 designated recipients and amount of credits to be attributed to such recipients, as provided by the
42 owner of the solar distributed generation facility; and

43 (v) exempt low-income multi-unit building owners from bill credit maximums and
44 subscriber count minimums for the host project.

45 SECTION 2. The department of public utilities shall promulgate regulations to
46 implement this act within 180 days of its effective date.