

Introduction

Acadia Center is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization dedicated to advancing the clean energy future. Over the past two legislative sessions, the Commonwealth has made big strides to clean up the electric sector, including the large-scale procurement of offshore wind and clean energy. However, there are many more opportunities to safeguard the climate and public health while growing the economy, protecting consumers, and improving equity, notably in transportation, heating and cooling, and grid modernization. This document lays out Acadia Center's priority bills in Massachusetts for the 2019-2020 legislative session.

Clean Transportation

An Act to Advance Modern and Sustainable Solutions for Transportation

HD.3009 (Rep. Ehrlich) and SD.1541 (Sen. Lesser)

- Implements a regional transportation climate policy currently under discussion among 9 states
- Invests proceeds in modern, equitable, clean transportation, including mass transportation, electric vehicles, and affordable housing near transit
- Creates a 15-member investment board and an inclusive public process to ensure equitable investments and to ensure input from marginalized communities and other stakeholders

An Act Promoting Zero-Emission Vehicles

HD.3547 (Rep. Hecht)

- Enacts several policies for electric vehicles, including codification of the EV rebate program, optional off-peak electricity rates, charging station guidance and planning, and requirements in the building code

Other Notable Clean Transportation Bill

- An Act relative to a Clean Transportation Future: HD.1236 (Rep. Hecht) and SD.1530 (Sen. Lewis)

Grid Modernization and Utility Reform

An Act to Protect Ratepayers

HD.1499 (Rep. Benson) and SD.993 (Sen. Comerford)

- Prevents the Department of Public Utilities from approving utility profit margins, known as "return on equity," higher than the average of neighboring states' (9.1% to 9.25%, rather than recently approved 9.8% to 10% in Massachusetts) and stops automatic annual rate increases approved for Eversource, which could save Massachusetts ratepayers hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Lowers utility incentives to invest in traditional infrastructure at the expense of cleaner alternatives

An Act to Establish Rate Options to Reduce Customer Costs and Peak Demand

HD.1497 (Rep. Benson) and SD.1643 (Sen. Creem)

- Requires utilities to offer rates that give customers the opportunity to save money by shifting usage away from peak times and help incentivize electric vehicles, storage, and smart appliances

An Act Promoting Local Energy Investment and Infrastructure Modernization

HD.1501 (Rep. Benson) and SD.987 (Sen. Comerford)

- Mandates the accountability, transparency and customer-side investments that have fallen short in DPU's Grid Modernization process to date
- Requires improved interconnection processes for local renewables, a timeline for advanced metering, and a requirement to use local clean energy resources as an alternative to expensive grid upgrades
- Establishes a new consumer stakeholder process for greater transparency and accountability and provides additional low-income ratepayer protections

Clean and Efficient Heating

An Act Sparking the Modernization of State Heating Systems

HD.2300 (Rep. Vitolo) and SD.1257 (Sen. Chandler)

- Creates statewide heat pump training program at Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
- Begins to change the gas utility business model to lower incentive to oppose clean heating conversions, lowers the risk of stranded costs after 2040, and requires that any gas conversions must be efficient
- Updates state building "lead by example" statute and requires non-fossil heating for new state buildings

Renewables and Clean Energy Procurement

An Act to Promote Fairness and Transparency in Clean Energy Procurements

HD.3640 (Rep. Rogers)

- Ends conflicts of interest in the evaluation and selection process used for procuring clean energy
- Ensures climate change benefits from selected projects outside of New England

Other Notable Renewables and Clean Energy Procurement Bills

- An Act relative to Multi-State Offshore Wind Procurement: HD.2206 (Rep. Rogers)
- An Act relative to Solar Power and the Green Economy: HD.2529 (Rep. Mark) and SD.1376 (Sen. Eldridge)
- An Act relative to Solar Power Equity in Low-income and Environmental Justice Communities: HD.602 (Rep. Holmes) and SD.756 (Sen. Chang-Diaz)

Long-term Climate Change Policies

An Act to Promote Green Infrastructure and Reduce Carbon Emissions

HD.2370 (Rep. Benson)

- Establishes an economy-wide carbon price designed to complement RGGI and TCI
- Dedicates a portion of the revenue to a Green Infrastructure Fund and the remainder to rebates

An Act to Secure a Clean Energy Future

SD.757 (Sen. Pacheco) and HD.1248 (Rep. Balseer)

- Updates the Commonwealth's greenhouse gas requirements to achieve net zero emissions by 2050
- Implements numerous other policy changes to address climate change

For more information:

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