



NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

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NJ Board of Public Utilities
Energy Master Plan
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NJ Sierra Club Comments RE: EMP- Reducing Energy Consumption

Reducing energy consumption is the one of the most cost effective and best way to reduce pollution and greenhouse gases. It is the lowest hanging fruit to reduce climate change but we are not taking advantage of it. New Jersey must start promoting energy conservation, tapping the enormous resource of energy efficiency, directly reducing dependence on non-renewable fuels and maximizing the benefits of renewable energy. Our state was once a leader in energy efficiency, but we have fallen behind. It's critical that BPU works to get New Jersey back to being a leader in energy efficiency so we can meet Governor Murphy's 100% clean energy goals and save money doing it.

Under Christie, New Jersey dropped from 7th to 24th in energy efficiency in the nation. For six years, Christie raided the Clean Energy Fund by over \$1.5 billion dollars. Now Governor Murphy is continuing the trend of relying on unspent Clean Energy Funds to pay for unrelated programs. This time, it's \$140 million worth. Instead of using \$327 million towards energy efficiency and clean energy projects for New Jersey, the fund will only have \$184 million to spend. With all the funding that's has been diverted from the Clean Energy Fund, we could have created more than 4,000 jobs, resulting in 100s of million tons of air pollution reductions over the next couple years, and would have created billions of dollars of economic activity.

We need to start weaning New Jersey off this pattern of stealing Clean Energy Funds and instead dedicate the money to where it should be going. Governor Murphy has rejoined our state into RGGI. It is critical that BPU maximize RGGI funding to support projects that make our homes more resilient such as weatherization, along with energy efficiency and green jobs. We need to help weatherize people's homes by air sealing, improving ventilation, or adding insulation. Energy efficiency and weatherization are some of the most cost-effective ways to reduce greenhouse gasses and air pollution. For every dollar invested by a homeowner they save \$4 and for every dollar invested by a business they save \$16. These important standards could save consumers \$11 billion dollars and prevent 25 million metric tonnes of climate pollution. Energy efficiency also reduces peak power needs and therefore saves people money because it could peak power can cost double or triple normal power.

New Jersey needs to be building smarter and greener if we want to reduce our energy consumption. BPU should provide a certification program for New Jersey residential homes. Our buildings, schools, homes, and neighborhoods should be at the platinum level for LEED certification. BPU must also mandate all buildings, their appliances, lighting, and equipment to be Energy Star Certified at the Zero



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Energy Ready Home Tier 3 level. New Jersey should also have an International Green Construction Code (IgCC) for new and retrofitting existing commercial buildings. These green certifications will help reduce energy usage and carbon footprints.

New Jersey's utility economic model is based on how much power they sell, this is unsustainable and will only lead to more waste and pollution. If the BPU wants to reduce our energy consumption, it needs to reform utility ratemaking so that company revenues are not dependent on the volume of energy sales, so that utilities financial incentives are compatible with our policy goal of saving energy. BPU must also adopt an Energy Efficiency Resource Standard (EERS), as mandated by recent legislation, that establishes annual enforceable benchmarks above 2% weather impacts of reduction in energy use with clear performance incentives and penalties for failing to meet the benchmarks.

The EMP must implement offshore wind, solar power, geothermal, and energy efficiency projects. We can promote new technologies such as fuel cells, wave technology, smart-metering, microgrids, green building codes, batteries e, and other forms of energy storage. Micro-grids can provide efficient clean energy and local resiliency and stability for New Jersey. BPU should link micro-grids to renewable energy. Distributive generation and battery storage could lead to further reductions and make current systems obsolete. We should be using dc current for long distances, upgrade our electrical substation, and better insulate our wires to reduce losing electricity.

We should be incorporating green roofs to help insulate buildings and save energy. Green buildings provide cost savings through efficient energy usage for heating and cooling of the buildings. These roofs also help with flooding by controlling stormwater. In our cities especially during the summer time, "heat island" effect causes temperatures to spike making temperatures outside unhealthy for people and requiring more energy to cool buildings. Having green and blue roofs would help limit this effect and keep cities cooler, as well as saving money on heating and air conditioning.

We can be a leader nationally in clean energy and clean energy jobs if we aggressively move forward with renewable energy such as solar, wind, and geothermal and reduce natural gas. New Jersey should also mirror California's recently passed law that requires the state to get 100 percent of its electricity from climate-friendly sources like solar and wind. New Jersey also needs to pass legislation that encourages homeowners and businesses to invest in solar power. This will help deal with climate change while growing our economy.

Sincerely,

Jeff Tittel
Director of the NJ Sierra Club