

I am petitioning the New York State Public Service Commission to upgrade their policies and regulations regarding distributed power generation (i.e., PV solar panels) to allow larger than 25kw panel arrays and to enable the use of “community” systems. Such systems would allow entities to install power generation capabilities larger than the amount of power they use and to share the extra energy generated with other entities, who then contribute to the entity having the panel array. This capability has been provided for in Massachusetts for several years.

The current NYS regulations (as reported by National Grid) limit residential distributed power generation to 25kw. While net metering is provided for the installing entity, crediting the accounts of entities other than the one having the generation capability are not permitted. The result is that the entity is unable to recover the total cost of the installed power generation capability. Instead, they have to take on a capital project and have a net cash outflow. This is particularly important for non-profit entities like churches who do not have the capacity for taking on debt or long term leases. This is an obstacle to the wider use of solar power generation throughout the state of New York.

What is desired is to upgrade regulations to allow those entities having advantageous siting and building characteristics to install large arrays and to authorize business mechanisms which would allow the means to recover the value of the extra power generated to further offset the installation cost of the arrays. The installing entity could subscribe (via contract) other entities to receive the extra credits who would then pay to the installing entity an agreed amount for their credits. This is the way it works in MA which is also a National Grid service area. With this model, the solar panel investor and all the using parties can realize a cost reduction as they adopt green solar power generation.