



For immediate release

GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic Calls for Solar Job Training and Solar Rebates for Families in Virginia

Media Contact:

Nayeli Pelayo
npelayo@gridalternatives.org
(202) 656-2473

WASHINGTON, D.C.; January 23, 2019 – This week marks the Virginia General Assembly’s hearing of two important pieces of renewable energy legislation that, if passed, would create local jobs, boost the economy, save families money on electricity costs, reduce pollution, and strengthen Virginia’s leadership role in an equitable transition to clean energy.

Legislators from the House Appropriations Committee will hear testimony on a budget amendment to direct two million dollars to the Department of Education for paid on-the-job training in rooftop solar and residential energy efficiency. This job training would help bridge the gap between technical rooftop solar and residential energy efficiency accreditation programs, which are already supported by the state of Virginia, and permanent job placements for those who have completed these accreditation programs. The funding has the potential to place more than 500 workers into permanent jobs in these growing industries, with a projected hourly rate two to ten dollars greater than they could otherwise earn without the training.

On Thursday, the House Commerce & Labor Energy Subcommittee #3 chaired by Delegate O’Quinn will convene to consider a number of clean energy bills, including H.B. 2741, which would establish a Clean Energy Advisory Board to develop and implement a low- to-moderate income (LMI) solar loan and rebate pilot program. The Clean Energy Advisory Board will work with existing Virginia financing authorities, agencies, financial institutions and the administration to access capital to assist in the financing and deployment of owner-occupied rooftop solar for LMI households. The LMI Solar Loan and Rebate Pilot Program will begin accepting applications in the Spring of 2020.

Together, the on-the-job training budget amendment and the LMI solar rebate pilot program bill can help ensure that *all* Virginians can enjoy the benefits of the clean energy transition, including reduced electricity bills, good jobs that can’t be outsourced, more resilient communities, and a cleaner environment.

“We are calling on Virginia legislators to support the expansion of the solar industry and create more workforce, economic, and environmental benefits in the Commonwealth,” said Nicole Steele, executive director of GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic. “It’s time for Virginia to embrace the new clean energy economy while lifting up local jobs and lowering the energy burden of economically depressed communities.”

About GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic

GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic is an affiliate of GRID Alternatives, a national leader in making clean, affordable solar power and solar jobs accessible to low-income communities and communities of color. Using a unique, people-first model, GRID Mid-Atlantic develops and implements solar projects that serve qualifying households and affordable housing providers, while providing hands-on job training. GRID Mid-Atlantic has installed 214 solar systems and helped households and housing providers save \$6.7 million in lifetime electricity costs, while training over 794 people. For more information, visit www.gridalternatives.org/midatlantic.

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