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Governor Signs Measure To Extend Successful Low-Income Solar Programs

New law assures continued equal access to clean energy and on-the-job training

Sacramento, CA—Thousands of low-income families across California are now assured access to money-saving solar technology and clean energy jobs training in the coming years, with the Governor's signature on The Equitable Access to Solar Energy Bill (AB217). The new law extends California's groundbreaking low-income solar programs to the year 2021, achieving similar installation targets with only half the current budget.

"Today, the Governor affirmed the idea that investing in solar in low-income communities can have a positive multiplier effect in green energy, lower bills, and job training," said Assembly Member Steven Bradford, co-author of AB 217. "I appreciate Governor Brown's ongoing support for this common sense measure."

The two programs, the Single-Family Affordable Solar Homes and Multi-Family Affordable Solar Housing Programs (SASH and MASH), offer solar rebates for families who meet strict income requirements and live in affordable housing, while creating solar job training opportunities in the fast-growing industry. The first of their kind in the nation, the programs began in 2009 through the California Solar Initiative and were originally slated to sunset in 2015.

[GRID Alternatives](#), a non-profit solar installer and administrator of the SASH program, sponsored the bill. GRID has installed solar electric systems for over 3,000 low-income families throughout California through SASH and has incorporated hands-on job training and volunteerism into every project.

"These programs have produced significant monthly energy cost-savings that families can use to put food on the table, pay medical expenses, or send their kids to college," said Erica Mackie, CEO and co-founder of GRID Alternatives. "The Governor's signature means that families across California will continue to see the benefits of low-cost clean energy, and we'll be able to provide even more workers with the hands-on experience and networking opportunities they need to get hired in the growing solar industry."

Beneficiaries of the SASH program include Jose and Margarita Hernandez, who installed a 2.1 kilowatt system on their San Jose home. The new system will not only prevent 62 tons of polluting greenhouse gas emissions, but will also save Jose and Margarita an estimated \$19,600 over its lifetime.

“They're on a fixed income and every little bit counts,” said their son, Jose Jr. “They'll be saving quite a bit; it'll be more money in their pocket.”

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