



Model Climate Laws Initiative

Model Climate Laws Initiative

Model Law – Facilitating Plug-In and Balcony Solar

1) Section 1 - Short Title

This Act shall be known as and may be cited as the “Plug-In Solar Access and Safety Act.”

2) Section 2 – Legislative Findings and Purpose

- a. The Legislature hereby finds and declares that:
 - i. Portable solar generation devices, sometimes referred to as plug-in solar or balcony solar, have the potential to offer considerable energy affordability, emission reduction, and electricity reliability benefits for consumers and for the state overall;
 - ii. Portable solar generation devices have relatively small upfront costs as compared to other types of distributed generation, including rooftop solar, and are more accessible to a variety of household types, such as occupants of apartment buildings, renters, and those that may not have the ability to install rooftop or ground-mounted solar generation;
 - iii. There are a variety of existing barriers to the widespread installation and adoption of portable solar generation devices in the state, such as utility interconnection and net-metering requirements; and
 - iv. Increased use of portable solar generation devices in the state would reduce household utility bills, increase consumer options, and reduce strain on the state’s electric grid at a time of increasing electricity demand due to new large loads and other factors.
- b. The purpose of this Act is to increase access to portable solar generation devices in the State by removing existing regulatory barriers and ensuring the safety of such devices.

3) Section 3 – Definitions

For the purposes of this Act, the following definitions apply:

- a. “Electric corporation” means a utility or other entity that provides electricity service to the end-use customer.



Model Climate Laws Initiative

- b. “Portable solar generation device” or “plug-in solar device” means a movable photovoltaic generation system that:
 - i. Is designed to be connected to a building’s electrical system through a standard electrical outlet;
 - ii. has a maximum power output not exceeding 1,200 watts;
 - iii. is intended primarily to offset part of a customer’s on-site electricity consumption; and
 - iv. meets safety standards as set forth in this Act.

4) Section 4 - Exemption from Certain Requirements

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary:

- a. A portable solar generation device shall not be subject to any interconnection agreements or net-metering agreements, unless the customer who is the owner of the portable solar generation device voluntarily enters into such agreements; and
- b. A portable solar generation device shall not be subject to any interconnection or net-metering requirements, including but not limited to [INSERT REFERENCE TO ANY APPLICABLE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS] or any requirements established by an electric corporation.

5) Section 5 – Provisions for Electric Corporations

- a. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, an electric corporation shall not require a customer installing or using a portable solar generation device to:
 - i. obtain the electric corporation’s approval prior to installing or using the device;
 - ii. pay any fee or charge related to the installation or use of the device; or
 - iii. install any additional controls or equipment, beyond what is integrated into the device or required pursuant to the safety standards referenced in Section 6 of this Act.
- b. An electric corporation shall not be liable for any damage or injury caused by a portable solar generation device.



Model Climate Laws Initiative

- c. Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this Section, an electric corporation may require a customer to submit a simple notification form to the electric corporation after installation of a plug-in solar device, provided that the notification form is available in both online and printed formats, that the form may be submitted online, by mail or in person, and that the contents of the notification are limited to information necessary for the electric corporation to continue to provide safe and reliable electric service.

6) Section 6 – Safety Standards and Applicable Code Requirements

- a. A plug-in solar device must be certified for sale in the United States by the Underwriters Laboratories or other similar nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- b. A portable solar generation device shall include a feature that prevents the device from energizing the building's electrical system during a power outage.
- c. Within [ONE YEAR OR OTHER TIMELINE] of the effective date of this Act, the [RELEVANT STATE BUILDING/FIRE/ENERGY CODE BODY] shall make any changes necessary to allow for the installation of plug-solar devices, to enable the connection of such devices to a building's wiring through a standard electrical outlet, and to ensure the safety thereof.

7) Section 7 – Prohibition on Restrictive Covenants [OPTIONAL SECTION]

A restrictive covenant, declaration, rule, contractual provision, or other provision concerning the installation and utilization of a plug-in solar device found in a deed, contract, lease, rental agreement, or the governing documents of a homeowners association shall not prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the installation and utilization of a plug-in solar device.

8) Section 8 – Severability

If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof, is held to be invalid or unlawful by a court of component jurisdiction, the remainder of the Act shall remain in full force and effect.



Model Climate Laws Initiative

9) Section 9 – Effective Date

This Act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to any and all plug-in solar devices installed or operated on or after this date.