The Power of Purchasing Renewable Energy
for your Home or Small Business (1 of 2) – WHY?

As Sierrans, we are aware of the importance of New York State meeting its goal of providing 50% of our electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030. Our 50,000 members of the Atlantic Chapter can be instrumental in making sure that this goal is reached through at least one important action - purchasing renewable energy produced from solar, wind, and/or hydro sources.

NYS’s Clean Energy Standard (CES) calls for the Public Service Commission (PSC) to determine this year how much renewable electricity utilities will be required to distribute under the first phase of the plan. The larger the demand for renewables, the larger the percentage required of utilities.

The solidarity of our members is important to bring a sustainable, renewable energy economy to fruition. As Gandhi said, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

Europeans consciously decided to pay more for electricity in the short run to develop renewables. The beginning of the European renewable energy movement was based on the desire to obtain energy independence, to escape wide fossil-fuel price swings, and the realization that a renewable energy economy can bring massive job, manufacturing and investment growth. Countries such as Germany adopted a feed-in tariff, which required higher payments by all ratepayers for electricity to secure these benefits. After the Fukushima disaster in Japan, Germany also decided to close all of its nuclear reactors within ten years, which added another incentive for citizens to support and promote renewable energy. The continued growth of renewables in Europe has consistently reduced the cost of clean electricity sources.

New York State residents have all the same reasons as Europeans to promote the growth of renewable energy as quickly as possible. We Sierrans have the additional incentive of realizing that the sooner renewable energy and energy efficiency can be developed, the greater the impact we’ll have on reducing the destructive effects of climate change.

This brings us to what we should do with our own electricity bills. There are numerous ways that renewable energy can be secured. You may have already installed solar panels on your residence. Community solar projects are becoming more numerous and available throughout the state. If you’re not utilizing any renewable power at this time. If this is the case please consider purchasing renewable energy through your electric utility.

Now is the time for our members to procure renewable energy, one way or another. Our actions this year may influence the Public Service Commission’s decision as to how much renewable energy the state will require under the 2017–2020 phase of the Clean Energy Standard. Consumer action is also obviously important to counter the efforts of the federal administration to promote the oil and gas industry.

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