

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1670

To require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program to increase participation in community solar and the receipt of associated benefits, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 27, 2017

Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program to increase participation in community solar and the receipt of associated benefits, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Community Solar Con-
5 sumer Choice Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. COMMUNITY SOLAR.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) COMMUNITY SOLAR.—The term “commu-
9 nity solar” means a solar power plant, through

1 which the benefits of the electricity produced is
2 shared by two or more electricity customers.

3 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
4 the Secretary of Energy.

5 (3) SUBSCRIBER.—The term “subscriber”
6 means an electricity customer who receives direct
7 economic benefits associated with the proportional
8 output of the community solar facility of the cus-
9 tomer.

10 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY SOLAR CON-
11 SUMER CHOICE PROGRAM.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
13 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
14 shall establish a program to expand community solar
15 options to—

16 (A) individuals, particularly individuals
17 that do not have regular access to onsite solar,
18 including low- and moderate-income individuals;

19 (B) businesses;

20 (C) nonprofit organizations; and

21 (D) States and local and tribal govern-
22 ments.

23 (2) ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING FEDERAL PRO-
24 GRAMS.—The Secretary shall align the program

1 under paragraph (1) with existing Federal programs
2 that serve low-income communities.

3 (3) ASSISTANCE TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERN-
4 MENTS.—In carrying out the program under para-
5 graph (1), the Secretary shall—

6 (A) provide technical assistance to States
7 and local and tribal governments for projects to
8 increase community solar;

9 (B) assist States and local and tribal gov-
10 ernments in the development of new and inno-
11 vative financial and business models that lever-
12 age competition in the marketplace in order to
13 serve community solar subscribers; and

14 (C) use National Laboratories (as defined
15 in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
16 (42 U.S.C. 15801)) to collect and disseminate
17 data that assists private entities in the financ-
18 ing of, subscription to, and operation of com-
19 munity solar projects.

20 (c) FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN COM-
21 MUNITY SOLAR.—The Federal Government is encouraged
22 to participate in community solar projects, including by
23 subscribing to community solar facilities.

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