

For Immediate Release

Tuesday July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Contact: Michael Flaherty

C: 608-332-5200

[mflaherty@flahertypr.com](mailto:mflaherty@flahertypr.com)



## New Alliance Formed to Advocate for Community Solar in Wisconsin

*Stakeholders from across Wisconsin join together to back recently introduced legislation*

Madison, WI. – To expand accessibility and availability of solar energy to all Wisconsinites, a new statewide alliance has formed to advocate for an expansion to community solar markets.

The Wisconsin Community Solar Economic Alliance (WICSEA) is encouraging support of LRB 1902, legislation to open and allow more robust subscription-based private community solar development in the state. A more competitive community solar market can increase access to consumer demanded renewable energy options, lower customer bills, and increase private investment in local communities.

WICSEA is led by eight founding organizations advocating together for increased solar opportunities in Wisconsin. The Alliance includes:

- Associated Builders and Contractors of Wisconsin
- Organic Valley
- Advocate Aurora Health
- RENEW Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Conservative Energy Forum
- Wisconsin Grocers Association
- Land and Liberty Coalition of Wisconsin
- Coalition for Community Solar Access

“This legislation marks an opportunity for Wisconsin to open and take advantage of new and developing markets for community solar,” said Scott Coenen of Wisconsin Conservative Energy Forum. “Opening up the marketplace will lead to robust and competitive community solar in our communities. Businesses, local governments, community groups and residents all stand to benefit from this policy.”

Community solar is a solar array located within a community where multiple customers can subscribe and receive a credit on their utility bill for their share of the power that is produced, just as if the panels were on their own roof.

More than 50 percent of American households don’t have access to solar power because they either rent, live in a multi-tenant building, have roofs unable to host a solar system, or live in a service territory of a utility that won’t allow it. Through community solar, people could be connected to a local solar installation who would provide subscribers with equal access to the economic and environmental benefits of solar generation.

Ed Zinthefer of Arch Electric based in Plymouth Wisconsin commented, "Many Wisconsin businesses and individuals are restricted from accessing the financial and sustainability benefits of solar energy. Allowing private community solar will go a long way to expanding the freedom of choice in energy for Wisconsin residents. There are significant losses in energy savings, business opportunities, and job creation that won't be realized until the Wisconsin community solar market is opened."

WICSEA supports LRB 1902, sponsored by Senator Duey Stroebel (R-Saukville) and Representative Timothy Ramthun (R-Campbellsport), to update state law to allow private development of community solar in Wisconsin. In addition to private infrastructure investment and economic development, adding local solar installations will make the electric grid stronger and more resilient. A more decentralized grid of local solar facilities can help even out the electrical load, reduce outages, lower the amount of ratepayer-financed transmission and power plant projects, and create more energy stability for everyone.

"Community solar expansion in Wisconsin has the potential to rapidly scale up investment in clean energy jobs", said Heather Allen of RENEW Wisconsin. "Our neighbor, Minnesota is a national leader on community solar. In the first six years of the program they have installed 794 megawatts of community solar and subscribers have saved millions of dollars on utility bills."

For more information about the Alliance, visit [www.wi4communitysolar.com](http://www.wi4communitysolar.com).

###

