



Our mission

Deliver rapid greenhouse gas reductions at scale, starting in California.

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March 24, 2021

Honorable Senator Mike McGuire, Chair
Senate Governance & Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via Committee Portal

RE: SB 617 (Wiener) SUPPORT

Dear Senator McGuire and Committee Members:

On behalf of The Climate Center and its thousands of statewide supporters, I write to express our strong support for Senate Bill 617, which will provide resources to local governments to support implementation of instant online permitting for solar and storage installations.

The Climate Center is a California nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 2001 with a mission to deliver rapid greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions at scale, starting in California. We are long-time supporters of solar power.

Before any homeowner can install solar, they need to apply for a permit from their local permitting authority. SB 617 will provide resources to establish an online system that automates the review of standard residential solar systems to ensure they are up to code.

A number of cities in California have already developed easy online permitting, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory has created a tool, [SolarAPP+](#), that is free to all jurisdictions for this purpose. SB 617 will cut the red tape that deters would-be solar adopters, reducing costs and increasing the speed of installing solar throughout the state.

The rapid growth of solar resulting from SB 617 will bring substantial benefits to Californians. Solar generates greenhouse gas-free electricity and lowers energy bills. Paired with storage, solar can keep the lights on and medical devices operating during planned and unplanned grid disruptions, and put electricity back into the larger grid during peak usage such as during extreme heat events.

This important legislation will help our state accelerate its urgently needed transition to clean energy and meet our climate emissions targets, which must be accelerated to be in alignment with the most recent climate science. We urge you to support SB 617 when it is heard in your committee.

Sincerely,

Ellie Cohen
Chief Executive Officer, The Climate Center