Renewable Energy Spotlight: Michigan

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Michigan Legislature Passes Landmark Package of Bills

Exciting things are happening in Michigan. With Clean Grid Alliance at the helm, a coalition of partner organizations came together in a historic effort to improve the permitting and siting process for clean energy projects. On November 8, 2023, the Michigan Legislature passed House Bills 5120-5121. Twenty days later, on November 28, Governor Whitmer signed the bills into law.

There are two key aspects to the new legislation. First, it sets a statewide standard for reaching 100% carbon-free energy production by 2040. Second, it establishes a legal structure that makes that goal possible. In a win for private property rights, the streamlined permitting and siting process enables landowners to use their land as they see fit. Developers and landowners can work together to reach the best possible outcome without being bogged down by cumbersome, overly restrictive regulations.

The law also provides significant economic benefits for local communities including $2,000 per MW to be used for police, fire and other infrastructure. This is on top of tax revenue they will receive over the life of the project.

> *"The legislation doesn't leave local communities out of the process. If the local community has favorable siting and permitting standards, developers would permit the project locally without having to go to the*

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> *Commission."*
> *- Peder Mewis, Regional Policy Director at CGA*

Michigan's Manufacturing Sector is #1 in the Midwest for Clean Energy

In addition to the new legislation, developments in Michigan's wind and solar sectors have earned the Great Lakes State a seat as one of the Midwest's top leaders in the transition to clean energy. Michigan ranks 3rd among the nine Upper Midwest states within the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) footprint for solar and wind energy projects in the MISO queue. Nationwide, Michigan ranks 17th for installed solar, wind, and storage energy projects. The state currently has 4,281 MW of operating wind, solar and energy storage, and there are another 13,557 MW of wind and solar projects in the MISO queue. Clean energy provides 8.4% of the state's electricity, which is enough to power 1.7 million homes with clean, affordable, reliable energy generated in Michigan.

Not only do renewables provide clean, reliable, affordable energy, but they also spur significant economic development. As of September 2023, Michigan has received $8 billion in capital investment from wind, solar, and energy storage projects, according to the American Clean Power Association. In addition, clean power provides $61.3 million in state and local taxes annually; rural landowners receive $46.7 million annually in drought-proof land-lease payments.

The increasing demand for renewables is a powerful job creator, and Michigan's long history in manufacturing makes the state a natural fit. According to the Clean Jobs Midwest report, Michigan ranks first in the Midwest with 49.6% of the state's 123,983 clean energy jobs coming from the manufacturing sector. Between wind and solar, Michigan is home to 10,458 good, family-supporting jobs.

Michigan's Solar Story

According to SEIA, as of September 2023, Michigan had 1,308 MW of installed solar capacity. Over the next five years, Michigan is estimated to add 3,375 MW of solar capacity. Nationwide, Michigan ranks 23rd in the nation for solar energy.
Michigan's current operating capacity of renewable energy, combined with the projected growth rates and new legislation, is helping our nation achieve its clean energy goals. At the same time, the state will benefit from increased jobs in rural and urban communities and the economic development resulting from each project as it paves the way toward a sustainable, efficient, clean energy future.

Clean, affordable, reliable energy is just smart.

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