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Governor Wolf Announces New Effort to Bolster Solar Energy in Pennsylvania

Elizabethtown, PA – Governor Tom Wolf today joined state and local officials, and environmental advocates to announce the expansion of the use of solar energy across the commonwealth, while ensuring that the environmental and health benefits of solar energy are experienced in Pennsylvania.

“This legislation is a game changer,” said Governor Wolf. “We are making sure that the benefits of increased renewable jobs, a cleaner environment, and a growing renewable economy will be felt in the commonwealth.”

The legislation, included in the Administrative Code (Act 40), includes key provisions that will enhance the solar energy market in Pennsylvania.

In 2004 the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act (AEPS) required that every year we increase the percentage of the electricity that we are using in the commonwealth that comes from renewable and clean energy sources and by 2021 half of a percent of the electricity used in Pennsylvania must come from solar sources.

This legislation requires that for a renewable facility to generate credits, the electricity the facility generates must be delivered to an electricity distributor operating within the commonwealth. Prior to Act 40 taking effect, Pennsylvania allowed these credits to be generated anywhere in the PJM region, which stretches from North Carolina to Illinois. This has resulted in a huge supply of credits being available, and— in keeping with the law of supply and demand—has meant that credits in Pennsylvania haven’t had much value.

The signing took place adjacent to Elizabethtown College’s 2.6-megawatt solar PV system in Elizabethtown, PA. Owned and operated by Community Energy Solar, and enabled in part by a state grant from the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority (PEDA) the system, which was completed in 2016, is the largest higher education-sited solar array in Pennsylvania.

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