MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF
S.4742-A (Parker)/ A.5896-A (Galef)

In Relation to Homeowner Association Restrictions on Solar Energy

February 2020

The Alliance for Clean Energy New York (ACE NY) supports S.4742-A/A.5896-A and urges its immediate passage. This bill would expand the use of solar energy by prohibiting homeowner associations from enacting rules that would ban or limit an installation of a solar power system.

Current law allows homeowner associations to limit or prohibit installations on members’ homes or property. Solar power is an environmentally clean and cost-effective way for New Yorkers to produce energy. Solar is increasingly viewed as a common component of homes, and its use should not be restricted. In addition, if paired with energy storage, solar power can allow the homeowner to generate power when the grid is inoperable due to severe storms, which are becoming more common.

This bill is similar to laws enacted by other states, such as Arizona, California, Florida and Massachusetts. The installation of solar energy will also increase the market value a home. A recent study from Berkeley Lab found that home buyers were willing to pay $15,000 more, on average, for a home with a solar energy system.1 Homeowner associations should recognize the value to all their residents of the use of solar and be encouraging their members to install solar systems.

If the State is to achieve the new Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goal of 6 gigawatts of distributed solar generation by 2025, laws to encourage clean energy production such as this need to be enacted and enhanced over time. From 2011 to 2016, the rate of New York residential solar installations grew, however, there was a drop in the number of installations in 2017.2 In order to continually see the rate of installations increase, this bill and other clean energy-promoting bills need to be enacted to expand the use of solar energy in New York State.

For the above reasons, the Alliance for Clean Energy New York supports this legislation. For more information, contact Anne Reynolds, Executive Director, at 518-432-1405. All of ACE NY’s memos on legislation are available at https://www.aceny.org/legislative-info

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