

# How States Can Maximize Clean Energy Benefits with Local Ownership

## State Laws That Boost Local Clean Energy Ownership

### ENABLE OWNERSHIP WITH FAIR COMPENSATION

1. Compensate Local Projects, like Rooftop and Community Solar

### INVEST IN OWNERSHIP WITH TARGETED POLICIES

2. Provide Grants and Loans for Local Projects
3. Prioritize Local Ownership in Programs
4. Simplify Rules for Cooperative Ownership
5. Ensure Access for Low-Income Households and People of Color



From solar panels on a school's roof to wind turbines in farmers' fields, locally owned projects keep the benefits local too.

Lower Energy Costs

Wealth Creation

Local People Get to Decide

Profits Stay in Community

More Local Jobs

More Public Support

## Program Highlights

- **New Hampshire:** The **Municipal Solar Grant Program** supports municipalities that deploy solar, reserving two-thirds of program funding for projects owned by disadvantaged municipalities and evaluating applicants in part based on municipal ownership.
- **Illinois:** The **Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Grant Program** supports planning and pre-development for community solar projects, including the creation of local ownership models, and prioritizes funding for projects that enable ownership and are in historically burdened and disinvested communities.

# Example State Laws for Locally Owned Clean Energy

## 1. Compensate Local Projects, like Rooftop and Community Solar

- **34 states have net metering rules** and **19 states have community solar programs** that give solar owners a fair price for solar energy.
- For net metering model policy, see **Interstate Renewable Energy Council's Model Net Metering Rules**.
- For an example of good community solar policy, see **Maryland's Community Solar Program**.

## 2. Provide Grants and Loans for Local Projects

- For examples, see **Rhode Island's Renewable Energy Fund small-scale and commercial-scale grant programs**, **New Hampshire's Municipal Solar Grant Program**, and **New York's NY-SUN residential and small business solar loans**.
- **Illinois's Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Grant** and **New York's Affordable Solar and Storage Predevelopment and Technical Assistance Program** provide financial support for planning and pre-development activities, including the creation of community ownership models and cooperatives.

## 3. Prioritize Local Ownership in Programs

- **New Hampshire's Municipal Solar Grant Program** reserves two-thirds of program funding for projects owned by disadvantaged municipalities and includes direct ownership in the evaluation criteria.
- **Washington's Community Decarbonization Grant** includes community ownership, engagement, and governance in the evaluation criteria.

## 4. Simplify Rules for Cooperative Ownership

- See **Oregon's securities registration exemption for renewable energy cooperative corporations**, which supports efforts like the **Oregon Clean Power Co-op**.

## 5. Ensure Access for Low-Income Households and People of Color

- **New Hampshire's Municipal Solar Grant Program** reserves two-thirds of program funding for projects directly owned by disadvantaged municipalities, per criteria for the federal Justice40 Initiative.
- **Illinois's Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Grant** prioritizes funding for **eligible communities** where residents historically have experienced disproportionate amounts of pollution and/or have been excluded from economic opportunities.

### Related Resources:

- **Advantage Local: Why Local Energy Ownership Matters**
- **Community Leaders on the Benefits of Locally Owned Clean Energy**
- **The Community Leaders Breaking Barriers to Local Clean Energy**

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