Making a Clean Energy Future an Equitable One

November 19, 2020

Please introduce yourself in the chat box with your Name, Location, and Organization/Affiliation

Helena Rose via IG: @earthbyhelena
About the Climate Advocacy Lab

Helping the climate community build grassroots power and win through evidence-based advocacy.

Our (awesome!) members

Workshops & Webinars

Research & experimentation

Online platform & newsletter

Contact: info@climateadvocacylab.org

Please introduce yourself in the chat box with your Name, Location, and Organization/Affiliation
Welcome to our speakers!

Donna Brutkoski
Regulatory Assistance Project

Yesenia Rivera
Solar United Neighbors

Jacqueline Hutchinson
People’s Community Action Corporation
Please introduce yourself in the chat box with your Name, Location, and Organization/Affiliation

Roadmap

- Welcome, overview, and introductions
- The report! (Donna)
- Solar energy equity (Yesenia)
- Successes and challenges (Jackie)
- Discussion
- Q&A
- Close
November 19, 2020

Making a Clean Energy Future an Equitable One

Webinar – Climate Advocacy Lab

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Where to find the report

• **Blog post:**
  https://www.raponline.org/blog/making-a-clean-energy-future-an-equitable-future/

• **Full report:**
  https://www.synapse-energy.com/project/energy-
  infrastructure-sources-inequities-and-policy-solutions-improving-community-health-and
Equity Landscape

- Poor housing quality
- Increased impacts from climate disasters
- Polluting resources sited in vulnerable communities

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Focus of the Project

- Electricity and natural gas
- Community-level focus: low-income, rural, smaller towns and cities, and communities of color
- Impacts: access, affordability, climate change and pollution, jobs
- Deep perspective on who makes decisions in the sector and how they are made, and who is left out of the process
- Methodology
  - In-person and web-based convenings and interviews with many stakeholders
## Four Case Studies

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<td>Enable the clean energy transition for all</td>
<td>Bloomfield, Iowa’s bid for energy independence</td>
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<td>Update utility regulation</td>
<td>Minnesota’s performance-based regulation</td>
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<td>Improve energy affordability</td>
<td>Ohio’s Arrearage Management Program</td>
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<td>Reduce environmental hazards and work across boundaries</td>
<td>Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative</td>
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Themes

• Energy should be a right
• Energy transformation is happening quickly – access is essential for communities with high economic and environmental burdens
• Improvements in regulations, communications, and education have key roles to play
Recommendations from the report

1. Enable the clean energy transition for all
2. Promote employment and diversity
3. Improve affordability
4. Update utility regulation
5. Reduce environmental hazards
6. Work across sectors
7. Build capacity of communities and advocates
Recommendation: Enable the clean energy transition for all

Bloomfield, Iowa

Available at https://www.cityofbloomfield.org.
Recommendation: Promote diversity in the sector

Targeted job training in clean energy

• California’s low income solar programs

Recommendation: Improve affordability

Ohio’s Arrearage Management Program

• Percentage of Income Payment Program (PIPP)
• One Stop Shopping
• Periodic Improvements
• Better links to Energy Efficiency?
• Minimum Payment reconsideration
Recommendation: Update utility regulation

Alternative utility regulation in Minnesota

• Adopted metrics
  • Average monthly bills for residential customers
  • Total arrearages for residential customers
  • Total disconnections for nonpayment for residential customers

• Proposed metrics
  • Reliability metrics related to equity
  • Metrics relating to equity in customer service quality
  • Metric(s) to measure workforce and community development impact, which may include workforce diversity
Recommendation: Reduce environmental hazards, work across boundaries

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative

- Multi-state, multi-agency effort
- Expanding to add states
- Public health benefits
- Periodic program review and improvements
- Equity update needed
Recommendation: Work with other sectors

- Transportation
  - Reducing environmental burdens with electric vehicles
- Broadband
  - Enabling clean energy transition in rural areas
- Water
  - Implementing efficiency
  - Rate design, utility structures
Recommendation: Build capacity

Co-ops
  - Board structure, diversity
  - Clean Energy offerings
  - Example – Kit Carson, NM

Advocates
  - Education on energy issues
  - Enabling advocacy at state and federal level

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Where can advocates get involved?

Education
- Complex topic and regulatory structure
- Community-based efforts, ex. Partnership for Southern Equity

Opportunities
- Not just state or federal level!
- See: recent webinar on cities and public utility commissions working together

Partnerships
- Cross-cutting
- Ex.: Environmental-labor alliances
About RAP

The Regulatory Assistance Project (RAP)® is an independent, non-partisan, non-governmental organization dedicated to accelerating the transition to a clean, reliable, and efficient energy future.

Learn more about our work at raponline.org
Advancing Equity, Solar Growth through State Policy

Renewable Portfolio Standards in the District of Columbia
What is a Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)?
Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)

- State-level policy to increase the use of renewable energy in the electric power sector
- Sets binding targets for electric utilities
- Sometimes called Renewable Electricity Standards or Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards
- Reliable way to grow renewables, but only as effective as the targets they set
For example, Washington, D.C.’s RPS:

**Standard**

Electric utilities must get **100% of their electricity from renewable sources** by **2032.** **10%** must come specifically from solar.

- Statute usually lists eligible technologies
- Target year. Statute usually sets schedule with intermediate goals
- Solar Carve-Out
Timeline of D.C.'s Renewable Portfolio Standard

- **2005 Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Act.**
  - RPS: 8.5% by 2020;
  - Solar Carve-Out: 0.32% by 2020

- **2008 Clean and Affordable Energy Act**
  - RPS: 20% by 2020
  - Solar Carve-Out: 0.4% by 2020

- **2011 Distributed Generation Amendment Act**
  - RPS: 20% by 2023
  - Solar Carve-Out: 2.5% by 2023

SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS
Timeline of D.C.’s Renewable Portfolio Standard (cont.)

2016 RPS Expansion Act
- RPS: 50% by 2032
- Solar Carve-Out: 5% by 2032

2019 Clean Energy Omnibus Act
- RPS: 100% by 2032
- Solar Carve-Out: 10% by 2041
Community Solar

- 2011-2013: Coalition building.
- 2013: Community Renewables Energy Amendment Act of 2013 passed.
- 2015: Proposed rules did not extend full net metering credit to solar subscribers.
- 2016: Council passed the Community Renewable Energy Credit Rate Clarification Amendment Act to restore full retail distribution credit.
Energy Equity in D.C.

- Established by the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Expansion Amendment Act of 2016

- Increases the amount of solar energy generated in the District, and provide those benefits to seniors, small local businesses, nonprofits, and low-income households

- Serve 100,000 low-income households & cut their electric bills by an amount equivalent to at least 50% of the District's average residential electric bills.

- Funded by Renewable Energy Development Fund (RPS alternative compliance payments)
Energy Equity in D.C.

Establish a Solar Market

Strengthen the market while building diverse coalition

Use the coalition and the supporters you have gained through the years to push for equity.
Our Tools

1-on-1 legislator meeting

Testimony at Legislature

Attend a lobbying event

Personal phone call

Personal email or letter

“Clicktivism” or mass online action

Most Effective

Easiest

Zoom or in person, pandemic permitting!
Thank you!

yesenia@solarunitedneighbors.org
Making a Clean Energy Future Equitable

PRESENTED BY JACKIE HUTCHINSON, MS, CCAP
Considerations as we create an equitable energy future
# The Home Energy Affordability Gap

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<tr>
<th>National Gap 2019</th>
<th>Missouri Gap 2019</th>
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<tr>
<td>$40,979,488,238</td>
<td>$697,578,567</td>
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*THE HOME ENERGY AFFORDABILITY GAP 2019 - Roger Colton*
Home energy is a crippling financial burden for low-income families

In Missouri and many other states:
- Families at 50% of poverty pay average 28% of their income for utilities
- Families at median income pay 6% of their income for utilities

THE HOME ENERGY AFFORDABILITY GAP 2019 - Roger Colton
By 2030 Elderly will out-number children in the US

- Elderly over 85 are expected to be the fastest-growing age group in our population over the next 10 years

- Isolated elderly are at highest risk of potentially life-threatening illness and death from the effects of heat waves
Health Considerations

- Studies have shown that elderly skip meals and buying medication to pay utilities
- Impact on children with Asthma
- Children at higher impact of heat related illness
- Inability to keep and prepare food
- Risk of frostbite
Inequities in Communities of Color

- Communities of color are benefiting less from new clean energy technologies and, as a result, they are paying more for their energy.
- When it comes to solar and renewable energy, African Americans, Latinos and low-income groups face barriers.
- Racial disparities in the energy sector are linked to the legacies of segregation and redlining in most major cities.
Working toward an equitable future
What is your role?
Work for Equitable, not Equal Policies

- Diversity and inclusion in clean energy sector and energy technology jobs
- Equitable distribution of cost for new technologies
- Solutions for rural communities
- Data driven solutions that do no harm
Future Energy Needs - Closing the Gap

- Expanded Energy Efficiency Programs reaching low-income
  - Increase weatherization focus
  - Increase ability for needed home repairs
  - Expanded alternative energy solutions in low-income communities

- Expanded Utility Affordability Programs
  - Percentage of income payment plans
  - Low-income customer rate class

- Focus on policies and programs that impact low-income customers
  - LIHEAP and other safety net programs
  - Minimum wage
  - Cold/hot weather protections
  - Affordable housing
My successes and challenges

- Local public hearings – getting out the voices
- Regulatory process
  - intervening
  - cold weather rule proceedings
  - settlement agreement
  - Developing efficiency programs
- Legislative process – educating policy makers
- State-wide energy policy council
Building vital Partnerships to expand policy reach

- State, Local & national partnerships
- Access to safe, affordable efficient housing
- Minimum Wage
- Access to education and job training
- Equal access to banking and financial services
- Sharing successes – gaining ideas
Thank You!
Discussion and Q&A!

Feedback
https://forms.gle/KL4TeUsqffb8Ps329

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yesenia@solarunitedneighbors.org
jhutchinson@pcacstl.org
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