**Renewable Energy: Diversity, Inclusion and Equity for Underserved Communities**

This proposal is designed to be added to and work with Path to 100 (HB2966/SB1781) in order to expand existing structures to provide a tangible approach to inclusion in and access to the renewable energy market for:

- Individual workers to be trained for careers in the renewable energy sector
- Minority owned firms operating in similar fields to enter the renewables market
- Minority entrepreneurs to be able to establish new renewable businesses
- Existing energy companies to diversify their workforces, suppliers and contractors
- All Illinois communities to develop location appropriate renewable resources

**Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship**

The Illinois DCEO has historically supported innovative workforce programs and career, training and entrepreneurial services. Establishing DCEO\(^1\) as the coordinator and clearinghouse for renewable energy workforce development will ensure a centralized hub resulting in more opportunity and participation.

- **Supplier Diversity.** DCEO would establish an easy to find and use, searchable database of diverse suppliers, vendors and subcontractors for the renewable energy industry
- **Worker Pipeline.** DCEO would become the hub for tracking all renewable workforce training efforts\(^2\) as well as a central point of contact for both job seekers and employers
- DCEO to allocate additional moneys as grants to existing and new training organizations
- DCEO to organize a council to ensure the needs of all sectors of the renewable industry are met
- **Entrepreneurship.** Small Business Development Centers to incorporate renewable sector
- **CMS BEP.** Ensure Renewable companies are explicitly recognized

**Diversity and Inclusion within the Existing Renewable Energy Industry**

The Illinois Renewable energy industry is committed to ensuring that it reflects the diversity of the state.

- **Diversity Mandate.** Companies participating in IPA REC procurements would be required to pre-certify that they meet one of the following depending on which is most appropriate:
  - Supplier Diversity Goal: percent of construction and vendor contracts/jobs created
  - Hiring Diversity Goal: percent of company direct hires
  - Alternative Compliance Payment\(^3\)
- Compliance can be met through any combination of the metrics below to meet the % goal:
  - **Diversity.** % workforce (measured by FTEs) that are diverse
  - **MWBE.** % of work attributed to contractors/subcontractors with diversity certifications
  - **Training Programs.** % workforce are graduates from the Training programs
  - **Just Transition.** % workforce that are displaced fossil fuel workers
  - **Returning citizens.** % workforce that are returning citizens
- Filing fee scaled to project size would be made to DCEO to coordinate above workforce programs
- IPA to consider these new requirements when setting REC prices for utility scale and ABP

**Access for Underserved Families**

Solar is a powerful tool to help consumers save money. Low income consumers can also benefit from solar participation but these consumers can be difficult to identify.

- **Community Solar Access.** Utilities to provide low-income subscriber to enroll in projects
- **Solar for All.** Ensure funds will be available for increased access to Solar for all families

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\(^1\) Funding to come from filing fees on renewable energy company Diversity Reporting.

\(^2\) FEJEA training entities, University/College programs, etc.

\(^3\) Payment would scale to the company’s degree of compliance.