

November 6, 2019

The Honorable Karen E. Spilka
President, Massachusetts Senate
Massachusetts State House, Room 332
Boston, MA 02133

Re: GreenWorks (H.3997) and proposed amendments to strengthen state climate goals

Dear Madam President,

Thank you for your leadership on climate change and clean energy. We are writing to respectfully request action by the Senate before the end of the calendar year to pass GreenWorks (H.3997, An act relative to GreenWorks) and amend it with new targets and goals for the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA).

The undersigned are members of the Alliance for Clean Energy Solutions (ACES), a coalition comprised of business groups, clean energy companies, environmental organizations, labor, health, and consumer advocates who are dedicated to advancing clean energy in the Commonwealth. Each legislative session, we support policy priorities that are critical to the economic, energy and environmental future of the Commonwealth and to ensuring Massachusetts national leadership in the clean energy sector. Our recent focus includes: increasing the state's renewable portfolio standard, modernizing the electricity grid, and promoting energy efficiency, solar growth, and electric vehicles.

In July, the House passed GreenWorks. Substantial public investment proposed for Massachusetts municipalities in GreenWorks can facilitate climate mitigation and adaptation, foster more resilient communities, lead to improved public health outcomes, and drive economic growth. With some modifications, GreenWorks can further advance the Commonwealth's clean energy transition.

The Senate has regularly championed bold action and clean energy policies designed to hasten the Commonwealth's transition to a clean energy economy. We urge the Senate to act on GreenWorks before the end of this calendar year, and to update the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) to include the following:

GHG emission reduction targets that are consistent with scientific consensus so that public investments enabled through GreenWorks are aligned with statewide clean energy and climate objectives

- **Adjust 2050 economy-wide emissions reductions targets:** The GHG emission limits set by the GWSA reflect the scientific consensus of a decade ago. Consensus has since shifted and the IPCC now definitively concludes that by 2050, greenhouse gas emissions must reach *net-zero*. This means that we must remove at least as much carbon as we emit. Additionally, at least 85% of the 2050 net-zero target must be achieved through direct reductions, rather than offsets. Many cities and towns across the Commonwealth have already adopted a goal of achieving net zero by 2050.

- **Establish interim economy-wide emission reduction targets for 2030 and 2040:** Meaningful progress toward the 2050 GHG emission reduction target must begin immediately and be made consistently from year to year. Establishing interim targets will therefore be necessary to ensure that sufficient interim progress in GHG emissions reductions takes place before 2050. Consistent with scientific consensus, economy-wide reductions of at least 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2040 will ensure that the Commonwealth successfully reaches net-zero emissions by 2050. Achieving these interim and long-term targets must be implemented through timely promulgation of binding regulations.
- **Consider emission reduction targets by sector that are consistent with achieving an economy-wide target:** GWSA compliance to date has largely been accomplished through reductions achieved in the electricity supply sector and via energy efficiency measures. However, emissions in the transportation sector are on the rise and building sector reductions are proving to be challenging and complex. Additionally, the Commonwealth needs a plan for naturally drawing carbon from the air by natural and working lands. Setting sector-specific targets (e.g., buildings, transportation, electricity supply, and natural and working lands) consistent with achieving net-zero economy-wide emissions will ensure that compliance is not driven or undermined by any single sector.

Ensuring state climate goals are achieved equitably

The fact that environmental justice communities experience the impacts of our changing climate and energy system disproportionately to other communities is not up for debate. It is essential that the Commonwealth's transition to a low-carbon economy be achieved both justly and equitably. As the state develops and implements policies to achieve climate targets under the GWSA, frontline communities and workers must benefit from the transition spurred by the GWSA, and environmentally overburdened low income communities and communities of color must be fully protected.

Passing GreenWorks and updating GWSA targets must be followed by additional mitigation and adaptation commitments

The ACES coalition remains supportive of swift climate action on the part of the Senate in addition to the imperative need first to pass GreenWorks with the GWSA described here. In particular, achieving the 50% reduction goal by 2030 requires that the state also move ahead with immediate legislation that prioritizes significant, no-regrets clean energy and carbon reduction commitments this session that will jump-start the Commonwealth's path to meeting the interim and long-term GWSA goals. The ACES Coalition's priorities for this session are presented in the attached document.

From devastation wrought by coastal storms, to the threat of insect-borne diseases like EEE, and increasingly frequent ER visits during extended heat events, our communities are already experiencing acute climate impacts. Directing public investment in climate mitigation and adaptation programs, including municipal efforts that support the pursuit of science-based emission reduction targets, will enable public dollars to be leveraged strategically, effectively, and in a way that can complement and scale up other public expenditures.

We ask that the Senate take up and amend GreenWorks to include the updates detailed herein promptly to ensure Massachusetts' continued leadership on climate and clean energy. Further, we look

forward to spending the remainder of the session working with you on passing priority mitigation and adaptation legislation that will ensure the state reaches the crucial GWSA targets described above.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and for your continued leadership on this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

*Deborah Donovan
Acadia Center (ACES Co-Chair)*

*Jeremy McDiarmid
Northeast Clean Energy Council (ACES Co-Chair)*

*DeWitt Jones
BlueHub Energy*

*Kevin George Miller
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*Caitlin Peale Sloan
Conservation Law Foundation*

*Steve Cowell
E4TheFuture*

*Sarah Simon
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*Eric Wilkinson
Environmental League of Massachusetts*

*Eugenia Gibbons
Green Energy Consumers Alliance*

*Bill Ravanese
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*Mike Cusher
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*John Rogers
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*Meredith Elbaum
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*Sean Garren
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Enclosure