

Resolution Supporting Net Energy Metering with Consumer Protections

WHEREAS, the U.S. electric grid delivers a product essential to all Americans;

WHEREAS, electricity runs our economy, and it powers our homes, businesses, industries, and the smart technologies, and innovations that enhance our quality of life, and

WHEREAS, the domestic development of alternative energy sources should be concurrently beneficial to our country's environment and to our country's economy, and

WHEREAS, The African American Mayors Association (AAMA) supports the ability of residential and business customers to generate their own electricity through solar panels (i.e., distributed generation), and

WHEREAS, solar success in America is the promotion of innovation and procompetitive behavior in solar markets, and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that when rooftop solar and other DG systems first came to market years ago, many states approved a billing plan called net metering to encourage their introduction, and

WHEREAS, the cost of solar power has declined substantially in recent years, especially for larger scale systems which cost 50% less than rooftop systems to install and operate,

WHEREAS, net-metered customers are credited for the full retail rate of electricity, which includes the fixed costs of poles, wires, meters, advanced technologies, and other infrastructure that make the electric grid safe, reliable, and able to accommodate solar panels and other DG systems,

WHEREAS, when net metered customers are credited for the full retail rate of electricity, they effectively avoid paying the costs for the electric power grid which are shifted to those customers without rooftop solar or other DG systems through higher utility bills, and

WHEREAS, shifting costs from those who can afford solar systems to less affluent customers and others unable to install or afford solar systems is an unfair financial burden, and

WHEREAS, all residential and business consumers who use the electric grid should share equitably in the cost to support its maintenance and to ensure its reliability, and

WHEREAS, AAMA supports net metering pricing structures that are fair and do not unduly burden low income ratepayers and supports advancing renewable energy while ensuring that it is not developed in a manner that is burdensome to the poor, and

WHEREAS, AAMA believes solar contracts should have certain consumer disclosures in order to help solar customers fully understand the terms and costs involved.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AAMA recommends Mayors become educated on solar financing options available, contracting terms to be aware of, and other useful tips, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AAMA work with the Federal Trade Commission and other appropriate organizations to develop a guide for homeowners that provides insight on solar financing, including leases, loans, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AAMA believes that the protection of consumers should be a priority for both state and federal governments, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AAMA encourages state policymakers to ensure consumers are protected and accountable for their respective states, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the AAMA work through the local, state and federal agencies to ensure that the residential solar industry will be appropriately regulated to ensure the protection of our communities.