



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
In support of
S.1958/H.2836 An Act transitioning Massachusetts to 100 per cent renewable energy
By Launa Zimmaro, LWVMA Climate Change and Energy Specialist
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The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts supports S.1958/H.2836 this session as we did its precursors in the last session, which were sent to study.

This bill is back with even stronger support from advocacy groups and legislators in both the House and Senate, with more than double the number of co-sponsors for this session's bill. Advocacy groups supporting 100% renewable energy goals include labor, business, health professionals, faith leaders, good government, environmental justice and environmental organizations. Twelve cities and towns in Massachusetts have already committed to 100% renewable energy goals, and many more are considering adoption. Six states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico have committed to 100% clean electricity; at least six other states are considering similar legislation (as of July 2019). The growing urgency of our situation in relation to accelerated climate change, species extinction and the enormous costs of dealing with the aftermath of monster storms and drought are driving this exponential increase in support.

Establishing 100% renewable energy by 2045 is a crucial driver of change and transition away from fossil fuels. The proposed legislation is a strong, comprehensive bill that exemplifies a holistic, systems' view approach. Key features include:

- Updates targets for reaching 100% based on current science, i.e., reality-based;
- Incorporates a system of checks and balances through ongoing and public-facing monitoring and reporting to ensure transparency and that we are on the right track;
- Incorporates strong consideration of environmental justice issues;
- Prioritizes displaced workers, low-income and communities of color so they benefit from a transition
- Creates a Clean Energy Workforce Development Fund for training, education and job placement, funded by savings from clean energy projects installed on state properties;
- Establishes enforceable requirements for accountability and to ensure progress;
- Promotes an "all hands on deck" culture through creation of an interagency working group to evaluate all state laws and regulations that affect energy consumption and propose changes to focus on and accelerate the transition to renewable energy.

Massachusetts is proud of its history and record as a state that embraces innovation, tough challenges and landmark environmental legislation, but we are losing our lead position. As a former member of this legislature has said regarding our first-place status in energy efficiency, "Being better than 'bad' is not much of an accomplishment." The science leaves no doubt: we can and must do better. Our future depends on it. Delaying and deferring serious action only makes our situation more precarious as climate change continues, unabated, on its relentless path.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, representing 47 local leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, asks this committee and the entire legislature to support this legislation this session and move us in the right direction as quickly and thoughtfully as possible. Please do not delay.

Thank you for your consideration