



## For Immediate Release

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### MA Solar Campaign Launches Third Phase of Affordable Housing Program

Boston, MA - Resonant Energy, the Boston branch of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) are pleased to announce the third phase of the [Solar Technical Assistance Retrofit \(STAR\)](#) program. The STAR program, first launched in 2021, provides technical and financial assistance to affordable housing organizations with sites in Massachusetts to catalyze the exploration of solar PV potential and break down existing barriers to adoption.

In the past two years, the STAR program has analyzed the portfolios of 31 affordable housing providers, encompassing more than 900 buildings. In the first two phases of the program, housing providers have committed to a total of 4.9 MW of solar photovoltaic (PV) across 113 rooftops, which is more than 20% higher than the program's initial goal. These projects represent nearly \$11 million in lifetime savings for owners and reduce carbon emissions equivalent to taking 879 cars off the road. In the most recent phase of the program, the STAR team supported seven participating nonprofit housing owners with successful funding applications to the Department of Environmental Protection's Gap Energy Grant Program, totalling \$1.2 million in grant funding for solar and storage across the state.

The third phase of the STAR program will provide another 10 organizations with grants to perform solar feasibility studies thanks to support from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's (MassCEC) [EmPower Massachusetts Program](#) and the Jampart Charitable Trust. The campaign has a goal of developing an additional 3 MW of solar which will create \$250,000 in annual savings for providers and \$6 million over the lifetime of the systems. For one selected participant, the initiative will include the exploration of onsite battery storage as a pilot to incorporate in future iterations of the program.

In addition to selecting 10 private developers for the third phase of the program, the STAR team will also be working with the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) to analyze their portfolio's solar PV potential and overcome the legal, financial, and technical barriers to adoption of solar PV. Successful approaches will be shared with all housing authorities in the



Commonwealth. “Deploying solar energy is critical to meet the Boston Housing Authority’s goals for shifting to all-electric, healthy, sustainable buildings,” said BHA Chief of Staff Joel Wool. “Generating clean power at home will put public housing tenants at the forefront of the energy transition.” The additional scope of work included in the Boston Housing Authority research is made possible by a generous donation from the Lauenstein Family Fund.

This year’s program kicks off with turbo-charged incentives from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), passed in the summer of 2022, which reversed course on prior solar policy that was phasing out the federal investment tax credit for solar PV. At the time the policy passed, the investment tax credit value was set at 26% of the cost of a solar project. The policy now institutes a 30% investment tax credit value as a baseline for 10 years and allows for an investment tax credit value of up to 70% based on project characteristics, with most affordable housing developments being eligible for at least 40-50%. Significantly, the policy creates options for nonprofits and public entities to receive cash in lieu of a tax credit for the first time since the 1603 Grant program (active 2009 - 2012) via the new policy’s “direct pay” provision.

“The Treasury has been directed to issue the final details of the Inflation Reduction Act in February 2023,” said Isaac Baker, Co-CEO of Resonant Energy. “We have already seen a dramatic uptick in interest in solar PV and expect interest to spike even further as the final rules come out and implementation begins. The savings estimates we’ll make in the coming year will likely nearly double anything we’ve seen in prior years.”

As the application period for the third phase of the program kicks off, some of the first projects from Phase 1 have been installed and are beginning to produce power. More than a dozen Phase 1 projects are scheduled for construction this spring.



*The Neighborhood Developers’ affordable housing development, 181 Chestnut Street in Chelsea, MA (Photo Credit: Sunbug Solar).*



One of the big challenges that has made adding solar difficult for affordable housing developers in the past is coordinating the review and consent process with all of the lenders and investors affiliated with their sites. The campaign organizers have been working with these parties to help streamline this process and have built extra staffing time into the process to help alleviate this burden on developers hoping to take the next step toward clean energy.

Housing providers interested in participating in Phase 3 can [apply here](#) by February 28, 2023. The STAR team will be holding [office hours on February 14 from 3-4 pm](#) for interested providers to ask questions about the program.

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### **About LISC Boston**

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is a national nonprofit working to forge resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity in the US; great places to live, work, visit, do business, and raise families. Since 2010, LISC Boston's Green Homes Initiative has helped drive resources to Massachusetts's affordable housing sector, align incentives to help owners maximize the energy efficiency of their properties, integrate appropriate clean energy technologies, decrease carbon emissions, improve climate readiness and healthy housing, and provide residents with a higher quality of life through these improvements.

### **About Resonant Energy**

Resonant Energy is a community-based solar provider that believes that everyone has a right to clean affordable solar. We help under-invested communities take their place at the forefront of the global transition to clean energy. Through partnerships with local nonprofits, we deliver high-quality solar arrays for houses of worship, affordable housing providers, and homeowners – regardless of income. Thanks to our network of local investors, we are making solar power accessible for low-income households and nonprofits at no upfront cost, and in some cases, at no cost at all. We currently serve communities in Massachusetts, New York City, and Long Island.

### **About Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations**

MACDC is a membership organization that seeks to build and sustain a high-performing and adaptive community development sector that is supported by private and public investment and sound public policies. We advance racial and economic equity by creating healthy communities where everyone lives in housing they can afford, benefits from economic opportunities, and can fully participate in the civic life of their community.



## **About MassCEC**

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) is dedicated to accelerating the success of clean energy technologies, companies, and projects in the Commonwealth—while creating high-quality jobs and long-term economic growth for the people of Massachusetts. Since its inception in 2009, MassCEC has helped clean energy companies grow, supported municipal clean energy projects, and invested in residential and commercial renewable energy installations creating a robust marketplace for innovative clean technology companies and service providers. Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides chairs MassCEC’s board of directors.