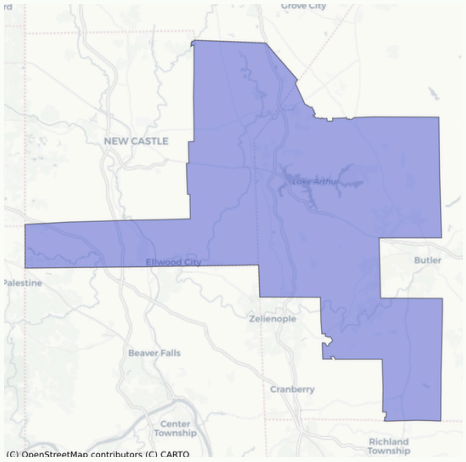
GET THE FACTS: PA SOLAR & AFFORDABILITY

Pennsylvania State House District 8

REP. AARON BERNSTINE

CLIMATE CABINET EDUCATION

OVERVIEW



Pennsylvania families are facing rising energy costs, and utility rate hikes show no sign of slowing down. But there's good news: **community solar is one of the most powerful, shovel-ready tools available to control bills for constituents right now.** Pennsylvania is one of the last states in the region without a community solar program, leaving billions in savings on the table. The policies to fix this already exist, we just need lawmakers to act.

In House District 8

$461 - $497

average increase in annual electric bill from 2020–2025*

Utilities are raising rates in your district:

West Penn — **41%** increase in electricity rates, 2020-2025*

Penn Power — **40%** increase in electricity rates, 2020-2025*

PA Average — **37%** increase in electricity rates, 2020-2025*

$101 - $404

potential savings from community solar**

Solar Savings

Pennsylvania families are paying more every year, but distributed solar offers a practical path to controlling costs and reducing strain on a grid that's already under pressure.

Community solar lets households subscribe to a share of a local solar array and receive a credit on their utility bill — no roof required, no upfront cost. Statewide, nearly half of PA households can't host rooftop solar due to renting, shading, or structural limitations.

Community solar can result in 5%-20% bill savings. In your district, that means the average family could save $101 - $404 a year.**

* Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission Rate Comparison Reports; www.puc.pa.gov/

** EnergySage; www.energysage.com/community-solar/community-solar-savings/

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Shovel-Ready Speed

Unlike large utility-scale projects stuck in PJM's multi-year interconnection queue, community solar is small enough to skip the queue entirely, helping supply match rising demand in the near term.

Distributed solar also lowers the market clearing price for all ratepayers by **displacing the most expensive fossil fuel generation.**

Grid Benefits

Distributed solar relieves pressure on PA's strained transmission system, reducing costly infrastructure upgrades that fall to ratepayers. PA's energy demand peaks in summer, exactly when solar is most productive.

Local Clean Energy Jobs

Community solar doesn't just cut bills — it builds local employment in a fast-growing sector. **There are 104,500* clean energy jobs in PA today.** Residential and community solar employ workers in **local jobs that can't be offshored.** Prevailing wage and apprenticeship standards are helping ensure these are life-sustaining union careers.

Growth Potential

Clean energy jobs are growing at more than twice the rate** of overall U.S. employment. States with community solar programs have unlocked significantly faster job growth. Pennsylvania is leaving this opportunity on the table.

The good news? Solutions already exist!

- **Authorize a community solar program in Pennsylvania:** giving every resident, including renters and low-income households, access to solar savings.
- **Protect and expand net metering** to ensure households and small businesses that generate solar power are fairly compensated for the clean energy they contribute to the grid.
- **Prioritize low-income and environmental justice communities** in program design to ensure the households facing the highest energy burdens see the greatest benefit. Low-income families currently spend nearly 8.6%*** of their income on their household energy bills.

* E2 Clean Jobs PA 2025 Report; e2.org/reports/clean-jobs-pennsylvania-2025/
** U.S. Energy & Employment Report; www.energy.gov/policy/us-energy-employment-jobs-report-useer
***DOE Low-Income Energy Affordability Data Tool; www.energy.gov/scep/slsc/lead-tool