

An Act Driving Clean Energy & Offshore Wind
[Chapter 179 of the Acts of 2020](#)

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In August 2022, Governor Baker signed into law a comprehensive climate bill which will help to achieve the ambitious goals set out in the Climate Roadmap Bill passed earlier this session. The legislation outlines the actions necessary to put Massachusetts on a path to achieve these goals, including clean energy production, transportation system updates, building regulations, workforce development investments, and more.

There were no direct appropriations made inside the climate bill. At the end of the 2022 session, the legislature considered a large economic development bond bill which included additional ARPA spending that would have been directed to the initiatives established in this bill. However, the economic development bill has not yet passed, meaning many of the programs established in this bill do not yet have funding, though the structures necessary to set aside and spend these funds have been established.

Clean Energy Provisions

- **Creates a Clean Energy Investment Fund** to be administered by MassCEC and dedicated to advancing clean energy resources and technology, deploying clean energy technology and the infrastructure necessary to support that technology, and providing training for the clean energy workforce.
- **Creates the Mass Offshore Wind Industry Investment Program**, to be administered by MassCEC, which will issue tax credits, grants, and loans, and make other investments in the offshore wind industry. Credits and other investments would be issued based on prospective participants' commitment to meet specific job creation and investment thresholds. Eligible recipients include manufacturers, financial institutions, researchers, and other initiatives that support workforce development in the industry.
- **Requires that bids in offshore wind procurement create quality jobs, benefit environmental justice communities, support diversity in their workforce, and reduce potential environmental impacts.** Additionally, the bill prioritizes bids which commit to work with in-state manufacturers, maximize economic development and employment opportunities, benefit low-income communities, and provide employment opportunities to historically marginalized groups such as people of color, women, and veterans.
- **Creates a Commercial Fisheries Commission** to provide recommendations on methods to minimize offshore wind's impacts on marine wildlife and their habitats
- **Creates a Grid Modernization Council and Clean Energy Transmission Working Group** to analyze the cost of requisite grid modernization efforts and work with utilities to ensure proactive upgrades are being made to transmission infrastructure.
- **Exempts Class 1 solar systems generating up to 25kW from the net metering cap** and loosens the "single parcel rule" for net-metering to allow owners of some parcels with solar systems the opportunity to be compensated for their contribution of clean energy back to the grid.

- **Allows for funding for planning, technical and program support for a municipality or group of municipalities with an approved municipal load aggregation plan to purchase electricity from an offshore wind developer.**

Transportation

- **Reaffirms the Commonwealth’s commitment to ensuring all new vehicles sold in Massachusetts be zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2035.**
- **Increases point of sale incentives for the purchase of ZEVs and creates new incentives for low-income purchasers.**
- **Requires the anonymized collection of vehicle location data to track ZEV adoption statewide.**
- **Requires all buses purchased or leased by the MBTA to be ZEVs by 2030** with full-fleet electrification required by 2040, orders MassDOT to work with Regional Transit Authorities to develop fleet electrification plans, and orders Department of Energy Resources and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the electrification of school bus fleets.
- **Requires that the Commonwealth’s building and electrical codes establish EV charging requirements** and create an intergovernmental coordinating council to implement an EV charging infrastructure deployment plan.

Buildings

- **Removes gas extensions from the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE) program** and expands the program to include commercial energy improvements that exceed energy requirements or meet a national standard.
- **Requires that the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) convene a working group to make recommendations to align gas system enhancement plans with statewide GHG emissions** through legislative and regulatory changes.
- **Allows DPU to require gas utilities participating in geothermal pilots to submit roadmaps for the decommissioning of gas infrastructure** and requires that DPU conduct an adjudicatory proceeding before approving any companies “Future of Gas” plan.
- **Expands Gas System Enhancement Plan replacement projects to include non-emitting renewable thermal installations and advanced gas leak repairs.**
- **By 2025, MassSave can no longer offer incentives for fossil fuel infrastructure** with the exception of back-up systems, requires that the program serve more low-income customers and requires increased data collection to improve tracking of the program’s service to low-income customers.
- **Increases the cap for Green Communities Act projects from \$100,000 to \$300,000 and allows DOER to adjust this cap bi-annually.**

Fossil Fuel Free Pilot Program

The climate legislation includes a pilot program that will allow ten municipalities to ban fossil fuel hookups in new construction or major renovations. Each participating community must first meet affordable housing requirements under Chapter 40B (10% affordability as measured by the State Housing Index or meet the safe harbor provisions), and the bill language explicitly exempts large health care facilities and science labs. MAPC will work with DOER in the development of regulations

for the pilot program, especially to ensure that we can meet our twin goals of reducing fossil fuels and increasing affordable housing production.