VIA EMAIL

July 20, 2020

The Honorable Robert DeLeo  
Speaker of the House  
24 Beacon Street  
State House, Room 356  
Boston, MA, 02133

The Honorable Ronald Mariano  
Majority Leader  
24 Beacon Street, Room 343  
Boston, MA, 02133

The Honorable Patricia Haddad  
Speaker Pro Tempore  
24 Beacon Street  
State House, Room 370  
Boston, MA, 02133

The Honorable Aaron M. Michlewitz  
Chairman, House Committee on Ways & Means  
24 Beacon Street  
State House, Room 243  
Boston, MA, 02133

The Honorable Thomas Golden  
House Chairman, Telecommunications, Utilities & Energy  
24 Beacon Street  
State House, Room 473B  
Boston, MA, 02133

Re: Alliance for Clean Energy Solutions Comments on the Need for Climate Legislation in 2020

Dear Speaker DeLeo, Majority Leader Mariano, Speaker Pro Tempore Haddad, Chairman Michlewitz, and Chairman Golden:

Thank you for your collective leadership on climate change and clean energy. As this truly unique and challenging legislative session draws to a close, we see an opportunity for both chambers of the Legislature to come together to make a meaningful stride forward in the Commonwealth’s just transition to a net-zero economy. We are writing to respectfully request action by the House to pass climate legislation that adopts a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions commitment for the Commonwealth and pass environmental justice legislation. Now is the time for such action.

The undersigned are members of the Alliance for Clean Energy Solutions (ACES), a coalition comprised of business groups, clean energy companies, environmental organizations, labor, health, and consumer advocates who are dedicated to advancing clean energy in the Commonwealth. Each legislative session, we support policy priorities that are critical to the economic, energy and environmental future of the Commonwealth and to ensuring Massachusetts national leadership in the clean energy sector. Our recent focus includes: increasing the state’s renewable portfolio standard, modernizing the electricity grid, and promoting the growth of energy efficiency, solar, and electric vehicles.
In the remaining days of the session, the Massachusetts Legislature has an opportunity to advance goals common among the General Court by passing major climate legislation that addresses the challenges and opportunities of the times. These challenges and opportunities include the climate crisis, as well as the need for economic recovery that goes beyond short-term stimulus, leading to lasting economic growth, improved environmental and living standards, and attention to longstanding inequities across our communities.

Far from reducing the need for climate action, the ongoing pandemic and ensuing recession have underscored the need for us to make meaningful progress this session. Climate legislation offers us an opportunity to look at clean energy’s relationship with the economy as a whole with a new, broader lens. This should include strategies that consider clean energy and a clean economy as a platform for economic revival via green recovery, “building back better” with investments in new infrastructure that can start to replace old infrastructure, expand energy efficiency, foster carbon sequestration in natural and working lands, and commitment to principles of environmental justice and equity in the jobs and customer access derived from a modernized, clean economy.

In many ways, the Massachusetts Senate and House have pursued parallel paths and both chambers share many goals that clarify the opportunity for major legislative climate action in the Commonwealth in 2020. At a minimum, Massachusetts needs to confirm and codify the appropriate, science-based climate target of net-zero economy-wide emissions by 2050. Both chambers have focused attention on net-zero by 2050 legislation following on Governor Baker’s declaration in early 2020. The Commonwealth must take swift action to address these imperatives as soon as possible in 2020.

Net-zero legislation must be supported by interim economy-wide emission reduction targets for 2030 and 2040. Reductions of at least 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2040 will ensure that the Commonwealth successfully reaches net-zero emissions by 2050. Within these economy-wide 2030 and 2040 targets should be sector-specific emissions reduction targets that mandate progress in each sector to prevent certain sectors from lagging behind others. Achieving these interim and long term targets must be implemented through timely promulgation of binding regulations. This roadmap would ensure that key areas of clean energy and the clean economy transition are on track for an aggressive next phase by setting interim targets for the 2020-2030 decade.

Environmental justice communities experience disproportionate impacts of pollution and climate change and often lack the resources to adequately participate in environmental decision-making. We support the environmental justice bill, H.4264, because it is essential to recognize that the Commonwealth’s transition to a low-carbon economy must be achieved both justly and equitably. Frontline communities and low-wage workers must benefit from the transition spurred by climate commitments, and environmental justice communities must be fully protected.

Massachusetts continues to be a clean energy and climate leader, but we know that these next 10 years are critical—that the 2020s must be a decade of action on equitable climate solutions and the clean economy transition. We’re not done with the policy work that will help lead the way for our clean
energy businesses to scale clean energy and to be partners in bringing the benefits of the emerging clean economy to all of the Commonwealth.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and for your continued leadership on this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

Deborah Donovan
Acadia Center (ACES Co-Chair)

Jeremy McDiarmid
Northeast Clean Energy Council (ACES Co-Chair)

Heather Clish
Appalachian Mountain Club

DeWitt Jones
BlueHub Energy

John Carlson
Ceres

Kevin George Miller
ChargePoint

Timothy Cronin
Climate Action Business Association

Caitlin Peale Sloan
Conservation Law Foundation

Steve Cowell
E4TheFuture

Sarah Simon
Environmental Entrepreneurs New England Chapter

Casey Bowers
Environmental League of Massachusetts

Kai Salem
Green Energy Consumers Alliance

Eugenia Gibbons
Health Care Without Harm

Mike Cusher
Mass Audubon

Sarah Dooling
Massachusetts Climate Action Network

Mark Sandeen
MassSolar

Francis Pullaro
RENEW Northeast, Inc.

Steve Long
The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts

John Rogers
Union of Concerned Scientists

Meredith Elbaum
U.S. Green Building Council - Massachusetts Chapter

Sean Garren
Vote Solar

cc: Representative Joan Meschino

Enclosure