



To: House Committee on Energy and Digital Infrastructure

From: Catamount Solar

Date: February 12, 2026

Subject: Testimony in Support of H.716 – Protecting the Value of Local Solar Generation

To the Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony. My name is Jarred Cobb, representing Catamount Solar, a Randolph-based worker cooperative that has been a part of Vermont's energy landscape since 2010. Our co-op is powered by 25 dedicated employees, 13 of whom are co-owners. We take great pride in building skilled trades in central Vermont and giving back to our community, having donated over \$250,000 to local organizations to date.

Today, the economics of solar for a typical Vermonter are far more burdensome than they were just six years ago. To offset a \$2,000 annual bill, a customer now needs a system that is **44% larger** than in 2020—growing from 9.6 kW to 13.8 kW. This is driven by a few factors, some of which we can control in Vermont: the net metering adjuster that has been continuously reduced in recent years, and the Behind-the-Meter (BTM) tax that penalizes home grown power.

The Vermont solar industry is currently facing a "perfect storm" of challenges. We have seen the sudden loss of federal residential tax credits as of December 31, 2025, and the rescission of \$62 million in Solar for All funds. These setbacks, combined with the upcoming expiration of commercial tax credits on July 4, 2026, and a 10–50% rise in raw material costs due to tariffs, have pushed the industry into a difficult position.

The question for this Committee and the state of Vermont is whether we will allow the federal government to dictate our energy policy. The changes made last year in Washington, D.C. were intended to cripple renewable energy and prop up more expensive, dirty, and unreliable fuel sources like coal, oil, and natural gas.



We urge the Committee to support **H.716**. By eliminating the BTM tax and freezing the negative export adjuster, you can provide much-needed common-sense relief that will return approximately \$5,000 in value to customers and simplify the installation process, helping Vermont families and our local workforce weather this transition.

Sincerely,

Jarred Cobb
General Manager
Catamount Solar



Legislative Handout: The Economics of Solar in Vermont

Presented by: Catamount Solar | February 12, 2026

1. The Rising Cost of Energy Independence

For a customer to offset the same \$2,000 annual electricity bill, the required system size has grown by **44%** in six years due to shifting credits and expiring incentives.

Metric	2020 (Historical)	2026 (Current)
State Blended Rate	\$0.154 / kWh	\$0.184 / kWh
Net Metering Adjuster	+\$0.02 / kWh	-\$0.04 / kWh
Required System Size (DC)	9.6 kW	13.8 kW
Gross System Cost (\$3.50/W)	\$33,600	\$48,300
Cost After Federal Tax Credit	\$23,520 (30% Credit)	\$48,300 (No Credit)

2. Current Valuation Breakdown (GMP Rate 01)

Under current rules, customers are penalized for energy they produce and consume on-site. **H.716** provides critical protections for these three tiers of energy:

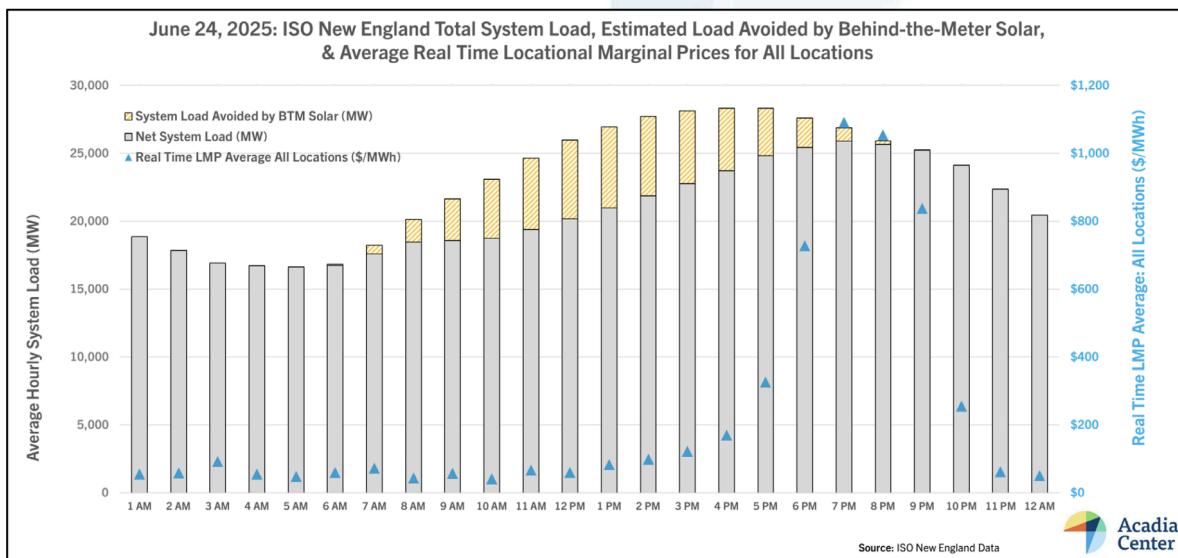
- **IMPORTED ELECTRICITY (~21.5 ¢/ kWh)**
 - The baseline cost to buy from the grid.
- **EXPORTED SOLAR ELECTRICITY (~14.4 ¢/ kWh)**
 - The credit received for excess power sent to the grid
 - **H.716 Impact:** FREEZES the 4¢ penalty, preventing further erosion of solar value.
- **BEHIND-THE-METER SOLAR "TAX" (~17.5 ¢/ kWh)**
 - The value of solar used directly in the home.
 - **H.716 Impact: PROTECTS FULL VALUE** by eliminating the 4¢ "tax" on self-consumption.



3. Why H.716 Matters Now

- Restores \$5,000 in Value: Eliminating the Behind-the-Meter tax gives an average customer back significant lifetime value on their investment.
- Enhances Grid Resilience: Protecting BTM value incentivizes home battery adoption, creating a decentralized grid that can provide backup power during blackouts and lower peak demand for all ratepayers.
- Bridges the Federal Tax Credit Gap: With the loss of the 30% federal tax credit, H.716 serves as a vital state-level "bridge" to keep renewable energy reachable for middle-income Vermonters.
- Supports Skilled Trades: Provides stability for Vermont's solar workforce (like the 25 employees at Catamount Solar) an uncertain future.
- Cuts Red Tape & Costs: By removing the requirement for additional utility meters, customers save roughly \$500 per installation.

Breaking Down an Exceptionally Hot Day for the Grid



BTM solar avoided as much as roughly \$19.4 million in costs on this single day by suppressing the overall price of wholesale electricity!