



# Solar for All: Solar for Household Savings Highlights

*Highlights from the \$7 billion Solar for All selected applicants*

**Background:** The Solar for All program is a monumental \$7 billion investment to enable low-income and disadvantaged communities to deploy and benefit from solar energy. The program is designed to deliver on the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution, save American families money on their utility bills, create high-quality jobs, and mobilize financing to stimulate the deployment of more residential solar projects. 100% of the \$7 billion in funding for the Solar for All program is dedicated to low-income and disadvantaged communities, exceeding President Biden's Justice40 commitment.

Each of the Solar for All selectees has developed a robust and thoughtful program designed to provide meaningful cost savings to households in low-income and disadvantaged communities. All selected applicants have committed to delivering at least 20% household savings to all households who will benefit from their programs. The non-exhaustive sample of plans below demonstrate the extent to which these programs will help reduce energy bills for low-income renters and homeowners and save American families money. Please note the examples featured below are not comprehensive, and some details may change as the programs are implemented.

*Disclaimer: The summaries are based on information provided in the application packages that selected applicants submitted to EPA and that were reviewed and selected in accordance with the evaluation criteria in Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria of the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Note that EPA will work with the selected applicants to refine their application packages into detailed workplans that are subject to final approval from the EPA Award Official. Note that selections are contingent on resolution of all administrative disputes relating to the competition.*

**District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment:** The District of Columbia's Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) will build on its existing Solar for All program. Since the program was first created in 2016, DC DOEE has committed to providing pathways for low-income residents to fully participate in and benefit from the solar market. The District plans to expand the number of homeowners who will be able to access rooftop solar systems through its single-family rooftop solar initiative. DC's Solar for All strategy will also include community solar to reach over 70% of District residents who do not live in single-family homes and are unable to directly install solar panels on their roofs. Many low-income residents in DC bundle their utility payments with their rent payments. This payment structure makes it challenging to provide financial benefits from community solar subscriptions because community solar credits appear directly on a subscriber's utility bill. To address this, DC DOEE plans to develop an "indirect benefits model" that will help owners of multi-family buildings to install solar systems to offset their buildings' energy usage and pass on the energy savings to residents. DC DOEE's Solar for All program currently provides income-qualified District residents up to \$500/year in bill savings (or 50% of the average electric utility bill). To date, over 6,000 low-income households have received long-term electric bill credits through the community solar program – and DC DOEE expects this additional funding will help deliver these same cost-saving benefits to thousands more households. Overall, DC DOEE anticipates cost savings of at least 50% per participating low-income or disadvantaged household in the District.

**Groundswell, Inc.:** Groundswell is a national nonprofit that designs and implements equitable community solar projects, develops clean energy programs that reduce energy burden for families, and pioneers research initiatives that help light

the way to clean energy futures for all. With Solar for All funds and support from the Southeast Rural Power Coalition, Groundswell aims to ensure at least 20 years of 50% electricity bill savings for low-income and disadvantaged households in the Southeast region. Because of the complex energy market landscape in the region, Groundswell plans to deliver financial assistance directly to its subrecipients in the form of 20-year electricity pre-purchases. The resulting electricity and savings will be delivered to income-qualified households at no cost as a “Solar for All Community Solar Credit” applied directly to their electricity bills through the coalition’s member utilities. In the one-year planning period, drawing on its prior experience administering the District of Columbia’s Solar for All program, Groundswell will analyze utility partner customer data to prioritize enrolling the most disadvantaged households with the highest electricity bills in the region. Once households are enrolled, Groundswell will also conduct energy efficiency assessments to identify opportunities to further reduce electricity bills, as well as greenhouse gas emissions. Using these strategies, Groundswell anticipates delivering cost savings that will help address the deep persistent poverty and high energy burdens across the Southeast region.

**Hopi Utilities Corporation:** With its Solar for All funds, the Hopi Utilities Corporation (HUC) plans to deploy solar home systems and mini-grids to provide electricity to hundreds of disadvantaged, low-income households on the Hopi Reservation. 35% of households on the Hopi Reservation do not have access to grid-provided electricity. High poverty rates on the Reservation mean that few community members have disposable income or financing options to afford the upfront costs needed to purchase and install solar energy systems for their households. HUC’s Solar for All program will install solar home systems for low-income households at no upfront cost to residents and will offer annual energy cost savings of 89% when compared to residential generator systems. Annual household savings could amount to \$8,000/year for off-grid households served and \$600/year for grid-connected households on the Reservation.

**Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget:** On average, Puerto Ricans pay almost twice as much for electricity as U.S. mainland customers, and Puerto Rico is second only to Hawaii when it comes to the highest cost for electricity in all of the United States. The Puerto Rico Solar for All Coalition, led by the Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget, was created to ensure that low-income and disadvantaged households are able to benefit from the abundant opportunity for solar energy in Puerto Rico. In Puerto Rico, the monthly payments for a residential solar + storage system – the most resilient option for the territory’s highly-unreliable power grid – are around the same price or only slightly higher than a home’s monthly energy bills. Many of the 85,000 homes in Puerto Rico with solar + storage installed as of June 2023 are generating 100% of their own electricity needs on an annual basis, reducing their monthly power bill to the minimum connection fee of \$4 per month. As a result, the Coalition led by the Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget expects that all projects included in this Solar for All program will result in net energy bill savings far exceeding 20%, and averaging at least 35%, with some seeing savings as high as 95%.

**Vermont Department of Public Service:** While Vermont has begun to make strides in providing access to renewable electricity production to the most vulnerable of its citizens, the Vermont Department of Public Service’s Solar for All Vermont program will mobilize financing and private capital to accelerate the energy transition for the most vulnerable with reduced electric bills and ownership of solar, while significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Between its Residential Assistance in Solar Energy (RAISE) Program, its Affordable Community Renewable Energy Program, and its Managed Affordable Solar Housing Program, households participating in the Solar for All Vermont program will save anywhere from \$325 to \$350 per year. The RAISE Program in particular will create several avenues for single-family homeowners to have direct ownership of solar panels on their houses, lowering electric bills by an estimated average ~24% for the first six years with increased savings in future years. The Department estimates that the battery storage installed in these systems will provide a resiliency benefit valued at \$25 per month to each household that installs one.

These five organizations, along with 55 other highly qualified selectees, will together serve over 900,000 households over the coming five years, driving cost savings of over \$350 million on utility bills for overburdened American families. By funding these 60 selectees, EPA will deliver on the Biden Administration’s promise to save households money while transitioning to a clean energy economy.

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