

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Charlie Baker, *Governor*
Karyn Polito, *Lt. Governor*



Matthew Beaton, *Secretary*

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Baker-Polito Administration Files Legislation to Improve Residents' Access to Home Energy Information

Bill Will Support Consumer Choice and Increase Energy Efficiency

BOSTON – Building on the Baker-Polito Administration’s commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering energy costs, Governor Charlie Baker today filed legislation to ensure homeowners and prospective homebuyers have access to information about the anticipated energy efficiency characteristics of residences and recommended cost-effective energy efficiency improvements. *An Act Relative to Consumer Access to Residential Energy Information* would require that a home energy scorecard and energy rating be provided to homeowners as part of free residential energy efficiency assessments, and after January 1, 2021, would require that home energy performance ratings be made available to potential homebuyers when one to four unit family homes are publicly listed for sale.

“Massachusetts is a national leader in energy efficiency, and this first-of-its-kind legislation would provide energy performance data to homeowners and buyers to improve consumer information and promote home energy efficiency,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “These improvements will result in the reduction of hundreds of thousands of tons of greenhouse gas emissions and hundreds of millions of dollars in annual savings for Massachusetts ratepayers.”

“Tens of thousands of the Commonwealth’s residents already take advantage of our nation-leading Mass Save® energy efficiency programs every year and this legislation builds upon those efforts to further reduce our energy expenses, usage, and emissions,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. “Energy costs have a significant impact on family budgets across Massachusetts, and energy scorecards will help families be better informed about their homes’ energy performance and how they can reduce those costs through incentivized energy efficiency upgrades.”

Under the proposed legislation, homeowners who receive qualifying home energy

assessments, including no-cost Mass Save® in-home assessments and RESNET Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index evaluations, would be provided a home energy scorecard. The information on the scorecard would include an estimate of annual energy consumption and associated cost based on the home's physical features, such as lighting, insulation and heating equipment.

The scorecards for existing homes would be coupled with recommendations for cost-effective home energy efficiency improvements. Through Mass Save® and other programs sponsored by municipal light plants, Massachusetts residents are eligible for financial incentives for efficiency measures such as insulation and energy efficient heating and cooling and hot water equipment. Mass Save® also provides zero percent financing for qualifying improvements and equipment, as well as up to \$10,000 toward energy improvements for income-eligible participants. Additionally, the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center provides rebates and loan products for renewable energy technologies.

"Home energy scorecards have the potential to significantly reduce energy use for the Commonwealth and the building sector, which is a leading contributor to our greenhouse gas emissions," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton.** "As a former contractor, I know the value clean energy and energy efficiency upgrades can add to a home and the benefits that a scorecard could provide to buyers and sellers alike."

"Increased energy transparency is an important next step in ensuring that Massachusetts secures a clean energy future that reduces energy costs and usage," **said Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Commissioner Judith Judson.** "This legislation builds upon our nation-leading energy efficiency programs by ensuring that regularly collected data can be utilized to improve consumer knowledge and decision making."

Massachusetts has been ranked the #1 state for energy efficiency for the past seven years by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), and upon passage of this legislation, would be the first state in the country to require home energy scorecards for residential homes to be made available to potential homebuyers.

As a significant energy consumer, the Massachusetts building sector could substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions through increased energy efficiency. In 2014, the Commonwealth's residential building sector was responsible for emitting 25.9% of the total greenhouse gases emitted that year.

"MAPC is proud to stand today with the Governor to support the home energy scorecard legislation, as it would create a valuable tool for home buyers, sellers, owners, and professionals in our 101 cities and towns and throughout the Commonwealth," **said Rebecca Davis, Deputy Director, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).** "Our clean energy and climate work with communities has long demonstrated that access to energy performance data is key, enabling greater awareness of a home's relative efficiency, energy costs, and GHG footprint and

thereby encouraging energy conservation measures that can create healthier, greener, and more livable homes for our communities.”

“Massachusetts has been number one in energy efficiency for many years, but it is not resting on its laurels,” **said Steven Nadel, Executive Director of the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy**. “By establishing home energy performance ratings and instituting disclosure requirements, Governor Baker’s proposal will spur home energy retrofits that improve comfort and lower residents’ energy bills, ensure those efficiency upgrades are appropriately valued in real estate transactions, and help home buyers find more comfortable and efficient homes.”

“Energy New England, LLC (ENE) applauds Governor Baker and his Administration for this latest creative initiative to promote energy efficiency in residential homes in the Commonwealth. The Home Energy Scorecard allows our customers to participate on a voluntary basis, preserving their local control over efficiency programs for their customer base. ENE looks forward to being part of enhancing the efficiency programs and greenhouse gas reduction goals of the Commonwealth,” **said John G. Tzimorongas, President and Chief Executive Officer of ENE**, which serves 24 of 41 municipal utilities in Massachusetts.

“You can't tell a car's miles per gallon by just looking at it. That's why we require that MPG sticker in the window. It lets consumers make informed comparisons, forecast operating costs and choose a vehicle that fits their budget. It also provides a clear incentive for car makers to make efficient cars. This is true for refrigerators, washing machines and so many other appliances,” **said Elizabeth Henry, President of the Environmental League of Massachusetts**. “Under this bill, home buyers will be as informed as car or refrigerator buyers. And home sellers will see a positive market signal when they invest in energy efficiency. Energy use transparency is a proven winner for the consumer — and the planet.”

Upon the enactment of this legislation, DOER would design the energy scorecard and develop the certification standards and trainings for scorecard providers. DOER would also provide training for residential real estate professionals on best practices for providing scorecards to prospective buyers.

This legislation builds upon the Baker-Polito Administration’s ongoing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet the Commonwealth’s Global Warming Solutions Act goals. Under Governor Baker’s recently filed [environmental bond bill](#), DOER would be directed to create a new clean peak standard for electricity suppliers to increase the usage of clean energy during periods of high, carbon intensive, and expensive electricity demand. In August 2016, Governor Baker signed into law bipartisan [comprehensive energy diversification legislation](#) requiring utilities to competitively solicit and contract for approximately 1,200 megawatts (MW) of clean hydropower and approximately 1,600MW of offshore wind. The administration’s new solar incentive program, Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART), will support an additional 1,600 MW of solar in Massachusetts, nearly doubling the amount installed as of today at half the estimated pricing of existing programs. Through the 2016-2018 [Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan](#), Massachusetts’ energy

efficiency programs set the most aggressive goals for energy savings in the nation.

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