

## Urging Equitable Distribution of Electricity Grid System Costs

**Committee: Energy**

**Resolution: ENE-15-01**

1. WHEREAS, The National Organization of Black Elected Legislative (NOBEL)
2. Women understands that electricity runs our economy, and it powers our homes,
3. businesses, industries, and the smart technologies and innovations that enhance our
4. quality of life; and
  
5. WHEREAS, the United States needs a diverse supply of safe and reliable electricity;
6. and
  
7. WHEREAS, the domestic development of alternative energy sources should be
8. concurrently beneficial to our country's environment and to our country's economy;
9. and
  
10. WHEREAS, it is essential that the U.S. find ways to assure universal affordable access
11. to a diverse renewable energy portfolio to prevent against the recurrence of
12. environmentally racist policies and practices – including disproportionately high rates
13. of exposure to pollution and toxic waste – that have plagued Black, Hispanic, and other
14. minority communities for decades; and
  
15. WHEREAS, a major recent development in the push for a more diverse energy
16. portfolio is the increasing availability of rooftop solar installations, but the costs of
17. installing and maintaining them are extremely high, leaving them beyond the reach of
18. most low-income and fixed-income consumers and thus inaccessible to many
19. Americans, particularly communities of color; and
  
20. WHEREAS, compounding this situation, many states' current policies regarding on-
21. site solar power reinforce historic economic and racial inequities in the energy space by
22. allowing those who can afford to install solar panels to push their monthly electric bills
23. to zero by selling power back to the utility and shifting the costs for maintaining the
24. electric grid – including power lines, poles, meters and other infrastructure - onto the
25. backs of those who cannot afford solar installations;
  
26. WHEREAS, studies by state public service commissions in California and Arizona
27. have found that rooftop solar rate structures are regressive in that they increase the
28. likelihood that low- income customers will see their energy bills rise as higher-income
29. customers see theirs fall; and
  
30. WHEREAS, African American families, which already devote more of their income to
31. energy than other demographic groups, cannot afford to devote yet more income to
32. subsidize wealthier households with solar installations; and
  
33. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Organization of Black Elected
34. Legislative (NOBEL) Women will continue to support the deployment of clean energy
35. sources, including solar and wind power, as long as pricing structures are fair and
36. spread the cost of grid maintenance and related items equally among renewable and