

AN ACT RELATIVE TO ENERGY FACILITIES SITING IMPROVEMENT TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, CLIMATE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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All residents of Massachusetts have a right to a clean and healthy environment. Yet, too often polluting power plants, electrical substations, and gas compressor stations are concentrated in communities where people of color, low-income people, and limited English proficient speakers live and work. These environmental justice (EJ) populations experience higher rates of pollution, disease, and other public health emergencies.

Decisions on where to locate energy facilities play a critical role in managing pollution and safeguarding communities. The Energy Facilities Siting Board (Siting Board) needs to be required to consider EJ, public health, and climate change as part of its deliberations. This bill will protect vulnerable communities, provide clear guidance to the siting board and ensure that everyone's voice is heard.



THIS BILL WILL:

- ✓ **Add EJ, public health, and climate** to the Siting Board's responsibilities.
- ✓ **Require community engagement** prior to filing for environmental or Siting Board review of a petition to construct a generating facility or an oil, gas, or substation facility.
- ✓ **Require a cumulative impact assessment and an EJ impact statement** before approval of any electricity generating facility or oil, gas, or substation facility.
- ✓ **Prohibit the approval** of electricity generating facilities or substations if the EJ impact statement shows that they will result in cumulative climate, public health, or other harms to EJ populations that are higher than harms borne by other communities.
- ✓ **Lower the thresholds** for what projects are subject to Siting Board review from 100 megawatts to 35 megawatts.
- ✓ **Require Siting Board to set timelines for review that are expedited** for solar, wind, and geothermal.



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Supported by the MA EJ Table: GreenRoots; Alternatives for Community & Environment; Arise for Social Justice; Coalition for Social Justice; Conservation Law Foundation; Clean Water Action; MA Climate Action Network, Environmental League of MA; MA Public Health Association; Green Energy Consumers Alliance; North American Indian Center of Boston; Groundwork Lawrence; North American Indian Center of Boston; Union of Concerned Scientists; and UU Mass Action.