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Solar stays strong, benefitting economy, job market

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Solar is still moving forward full steam ahead in Mass., and across the nation as well. According to a new report from the SEIA (Solar Energy Industry Association) and GTM Research, photovoltaic (PV) solar installations totaled 832 MW (megawatts) in Q2 2013, up 15% over Q1 2013, bringing overall solar capacity in the U.S. to 9.4 GW (gigawatts). The SEIA predicts that cumulative installed solar PV capacity will surpass 10 GW by the end of the year, and that the U.S. share of global solar installations will reach a high of 13%, up from 5% in 2008.

Mass. was a strong contributor to this total in the first half of the year, and now has 272 MW of solar installed, allowing it to climb back into the top 5 for the states most attractive for solar on the SEIA Index. It remains the only New England state in the top 10, behind perennial powerhouses California, Arizona, New Jersey and North Carolina. The growth is comprised of gains in both the residential and commercial sectors in Mass. despite questions about how future incentive programs will work. With much of that "uncertainty" resolved with the new SREC II regulation programs, and installation prices continuing to drop (down 5.4% nationally from Q1 2012), the remainder of 2013 looks very strong.

As you might expect, all the green growth via solar has had another impact: A big plus sign for the Mass. economy and for the state's job market. The 2013 Mass. Clean Energy Industry Report from the Mass. Clean Energy Center shows clean energy jobs grew by 11.8% from 2012 to 2013, following 11.2% growth the year before and 6.7% growth in 2011. In just the past two years, clean energy sector jobs have grown by 24% overall. Jobs in the solar industry make up nearly 60% of this total. According to the CEC, this success in growing clean energy jobs is defying national and global economic trends and puts Mass. squarely on the global map as a leading clean energy economy.

Interested in learning more about whether a solar PV solution is right for your commercial property? An experienced, professional solar project developer can best explain the benefits of solar for your business, including all the new incentives available, and help you choose the best path for financing. Solar continues to march forward in Mass. - it's time to see why!

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