SENATE, No. 2606 **STATE OF NEW JERSEY** 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 25, 2020

Sponsored by: Senator BOB SMITH District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset) Senator JAMES BEACH District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Allows installation of residential solar energy systems prior to obtaining construction permit or interconnection approval during COVID-19 emergency.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/3/2020)

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1 AN ACT concerning certain permitting and interconnection 2 requirements for solar energy systems. 3 4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State 5 of New Jersey: 6 7 1. As used in this act: 8 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Community 9 Affairs. 10 "Construction official" means a qualified person appointed by 11 the municipal appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to 12 P.L.1975, c.217; (C.52:27D-119 et seq.) to enforce and administer the State Uniform Construction Code within the jurisdiction of the 13 14 enforcing agency. 15 "Department" means the Department of Community Affairs. 16 "Electrical subcode official" means a qualified person appointed 17 by the municipal appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to P.L.1975, c.217; (C.52:27D-119 et seq.) to enforce and 18 administer the provisions of the electrical subcode within the 19 20 jurisdiction of the enforcing agency. 21 "Enforcing agency" means the enforcing agency in any 22 municipality designated to administer and enforce the "State 23 Uniform Construction Code Act" pursuant to section 8 of 24 P.L.1975, c.217 (C.52:27D-126), and regulations promulgated 25 thereunder. 26 "Residential solar energy system" means any system which uses 27 solar energy to provide all or a portion of the heating, cooling, or general energy needs of a single-family home, including, but not 28 29 limited to, nocturnal heat radiation, flat plate or focusing solar 30 collectors, or photovoltaic solar cells. 31 "Subcode" means any of the national model codes, parts thereof, 32 or other codes or standards as adopted by reference in rules and regulations adopted by the department pursuant to P.L.1975, c.217; 33 34 (C.52:27D-119 et seq.). 35 36 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of P.L.1975, c.217; 37 (C.52:27D-119 et seq.), any rule or regulation adopted pursuant thereto, or any local ordinance to the contrary, a person may 38 39 construct or install a residential solar energy system prior to filing 40 an application with a construction official or electrical subcode 41 official, or obtaining the required permit therefor, provided that: 42 the person obtains the required permit for the construction of a. 43 the residential solar energy system prior to the connection of the 44 system to any device that stores or utilizes electrical power, 45 including the interconnection of the system to the electric grid; and 46 b. the construction project is carried out in accordance with all 47 other applicable State laws and local ordinances.

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3. Notwithstanding any provisions of P.L.1999, c.23 (C.48:3-49 et seq.) or any rule or regulation adopted pursuant thereto to the contrary, a person may construct or install a residential solar energy system prior to applying, or receiving approval, for interconnection to the electric grid from an electric public utility, provided that the person receives approval from the utility prior to interconnecting the system to the electric grid.

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9 4. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire 90 10 days after the expiration of the public health emergency related to 11 COVID-19, which was declared by the Governor pursuant to the 12 "Emergency Health Powers Act," P.L.2005, c.222 (C.26:13-1 et 13 seq.) in March 2020.

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STATEMENT

18 This bill would allow solar energy providers to construct and 19 install residential solar projects on single-family homes prior to 20 obtaining a construction permit during the duration of the public 21 health emergency caused by COVID-19. The bill would also allow 22 the residential solar energy projects to proceed prior to obtaining an 23 electric utility's approval for interconnection of the solar system to 24 the electric grid during the COVID-19 emergency. Under the bill, 25 both the construction permit and the approval for interconnection 26 would be required prior to activating the residential solar energy 27 system or connecting it to the electric grid.