

INFORMATION SHEET FROM CA SOLAR AND STORAGE ASSOCIATION ON RESIDENTIAL SOLAR AUTOMATION SOFTWARE

IGOR TREGUB | Senior Policy Advisor
California Solar & Storage Association
www.calssa.org | 510.295.8798 | igor@calssa.org

At a time when the rooftop solar and storage industry has had to play defense on many fronts, we have some major good news to report for a change. Last week SolarAPP+, an automated application to speed up and increase the accuracy of permitting new residential rooftop solar and storage systems, received a boost statewide and nationally. Just last week, \$20 million in state funding was approved via the California budget, and several California mayors and other local officials were prominently featured as part of the SolarAPP+ national launch.

On July 13, **Governor Newsom signed a California budget that includes \$20 million for technical assistance targeted for local jurisdictions planning to adopt expedited permitting software such as SolarAPP+** (Section 76 of SB 129, the Budget Act). These funds are intended for use to support a non-competitive grant program for cities and counties to establish such tools. The \$20 million fund was initially included as part of SB 617, a bill that would have created a local mandate for local jurisdictions to adopt an automated permitting tool such as SolarAPP+ in counties of a certain population size. Despite several bipartisan committee votes, the bill failed to be voted out of the Senate Appropriations Committee. The failure of this bill made it even more important that the \$20 million be appropriated as part of the California budget, and CALSSA staff worked hard to ensure that the State Senate, Assembly, and Governor's Office included it in the final budget.

The California Energy Commission (CEC) is charged with expending these funds by June 30, 2023 and liquidating them by June 30, 2027. The CEC implementation process will likely take approximately nine months. In these coming months, we will engage with the CEC to ensure that the intent of the legislation is fully realized, including the issuance of easy-to-access, non-competitive grants to compensate local jurisdictions for staff time incurred, both prospectively and, for those jurisdictions considering SolarAPP+ today, retroactively.

Last week CALSSA joined the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and public officials and environmental advocacy organizations from across the nation to kick off the [official](#)

[launch of SolarAPP+](#). DOE Secretary Granholm challenged 125 jurisdictions across the nation to begin the process of adopting this tool by the end of the year. As of last week, about 90 jurisdictions across the nation were in discussion about doing so, with California cities and counties leading the way: the City of Menifee officially launched SolarAPP+ last week, the City of Stockton and County of Sonoma are scheduled to follow suit by September 1, 2021, and the City of Pleasant Hill became one of the first jurisdictions of the nation to launch SolarAPP+ in May.

According to [a new report issued by SPUR](#), this windfall - assuming local jurisdictions apply for it - promises to translate to \$7.5 billion in cost savings and 780,000 jobs in the solar industry.

The Takeaway

\$20 million was approved in the California state budget for automated solar permitting tools like SolarAPP+.