



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senator Gianaris, Queens Advocates, Businesses, and Elected Officials Call for More New York Solar

MICHAEL GIANARIS August 15, 2018

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LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y. – The Million Solar Strong Campaign, a movement of leading industry, environmental, clean energy and community organizations, was joined by Queens elected officials and community leaders to urge New York State to support the bold new goal of powering one million New York households—including 100,000 low-income households—with solar by 2023.

The group chose Long Island City for the announcement near an existing solar project, to highlight the role solar energy can play in meeting New York City's energy needs while creating new jobs. EmPower, a Long-Island based solar company that just recently opened a Queens office joined the event to show its investment in the borough.

"New York can be a national leader in renewable energy and solar power is a great place to build our green energy future," said **Senator Michael Gianaris** . "I am pleased to join the Queens community in pushing for a strong plan for the future of our state."

"Solar energy can be expanded to help our communities and environment" said **Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan** . "I look forward to continue having these discussions at the state level."

"Solar and batteries in Queens are going to transform the community," said **David G. Schieren, Chief Executive Officer of EmPower Solar**. "The incentives are among the best in the country, electricity costs are high, local officials support the industry, and the community has the collective desire to improve air quality for better public health. EmPower is thrilled to partner with the Million Solar Strong initiative to make solar energy wildly successful and impactful throughout New York."

"We have a duty to our city and our planet to make clean energy like solar power more accessible. Investing in solar energy must be a key part of our strategy for economic innovation and sustainability in Queens moving forward. Million Solar Strong has a real and attainable goal of powering 100,000 low-income households with solar power. We can achieve our green energy future, but it takes investment today," said **New York City Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer**.

"As we reduce our reliance on dirty fossil fuels, we also see the reality of renewable energy taking shape," said **New York City Council Member Costa Constantinides**, District 22, Chair of

the Committee on Environmental Protection. “Solar energy is a big part of that and needs a robust support system to make Queens a greener, cleaner place to live. In Astoria, we are in the process of installing more solar panels on schools as well as the Steinway Library, one of the most frequented in the Queens Library system. I look forward to seeing these efforts continue grow.”

“The Queens Chamber is excited about the prospect of an ever growing solar presence here in Queens County. As the largest geographic borough in NYC, Queens is ripe for greater development of solar power. Having our Member EmPower Solar open an office and have a direct presence in Queens County is a major step forward,” said **Tom Grech, President and CEO, Queens Chamber of Commerce.**

The Trump Administration’s reckless actions on climate, the environment, and clean energy require an equally bold response from New York. Making New York ‘One Million Solar Strong’ is the most important thing Governor Cuomo can do to protect and strengthen New York’s significant progress on solar.

Currently, New York State has over 200,000 households powered by solar and 9,000 workers in the fast growing solar industry. Powering one million New York households with solar will generate jobs, reduce and stabilize utility bills, stimulate local investment, cut harmful air pollution, accelerate an equitable transition to our clean energy future, and counter the Trump Administration’s attacks.

The coalition is calling on Governor Cuomo to institute and support concrete policies to reach the one million solar strong goal. The coalition has released two roadmaps outlining robust policy recommendations to achieve the goal of one million households and one hundred thousand low-income households powered by solar, including:

- Fair customer compensation

- Drive accelerated and diverse solar growth
- Facilitate affordable financing for solar growth, especially for new market sectors and underserved communities
- Make solar a win-win for municipalities and customers
- Ensure the modern grid and solar serve each other
- Expand access for low-income, environmental justice and other underserved communities

### **About the Million Solar Strong Coalition**

The Million Solar Strong Coalition is a movement of industry, environmental, clean energy and community organizations united by the vision of a strong clean energy economy that works for all New Yorkers. Visit [www.solarstrongny.org](http://www.solarstrongny.org) to learn more about the campaign calling on Governor Cuomo to adopt a goal of one million solar households by 2023 and to read the policy roadmaps.