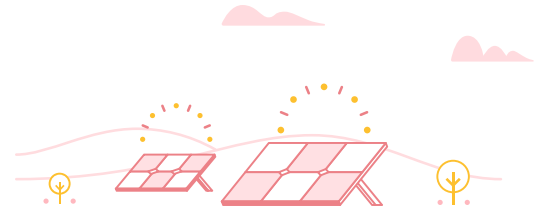


# Cross-utility crediting is an environmental justice issue.



## Background: The promise of community solar

Community solar has the potential to make solar power accessible for millions of Americans who can't install rooftop solar panels. Two-thirds of American households — 85 million homes — aren't a good fit for rooftop solar for one reason or another (e.g., don't own their home, wrong kind of roof, can't afford the cost).

Community solar can solve that huge access gap. With community solar, utility customers can repurpose part of their power bill to support a local solar farm. Instead of installing rooftop panels, customers subscribe to the solar farm for no additional cost. As the solar farm generates energy, they earn savings on their monthly power bill and help add more clean energy to their local power supply.

## Barriers to access

Currently, only 19 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation to support community solar. Even in those states, not everyone can join a community solar farm. Right now, arbitrary geographic barriers exist that only allow people to join community solar projects located within their same utility territory. That's fine for folks in Upstate New York, say, where there is abundant open space to build solar farms, and the vast majority of community solar projects are being built. But in New York City, open space is harder to come by. Solar developers are limited in the number of farms they can build and how large those farms can be, which limits the number of people who can join them and access the money-saving benefits of community solar.

It also means that many of the people who could benefit from community solar the most — low-income residents in cities — have fewer opportunities to access it.

The answer is cross-utility crediting.

## What is cross-utility crediting?

Cross-utility crediting allows customers in any utility territory to join a community solar project located anywhere in their state and enjoy the same bill savings as everyone else. Cross-utility crediting will open community solar to even more people, especially to disadvantaged communities.

## Legislative efforts underway in New York State

Senator Kevin Parker (D - Brooklyn) and Assembly Member Michael Cusick (D - Staten Island), the respective Chairs of the Energy committees in the two houses of the legislature, introduced bills (S.3521 and A.3805) to make community solar savings more accessible to all New Yorkers, including low- and moderate-income ratepayers and disadvantaged communities. This legislation would direct the New York Public Service Commission to eliminate arbitrary geographic barriers drawn along utility service territory lines, so the ratepayers in one utility can benefit from the community solar projects in another.