

1 [Supporting California State Senate Bill No. 379 (Wiener) - Residential Solar Energy Systems:
2 Permitting]

3 **Resolution supporting California State Senate Bill No. 379, Residential Solar Energy**
4 **Systems: Permitting, introduced by Senator Scott Wiener, that would require certain**
5 **jurisdictions to provide an online instant solar permitting process for residential solar**
6 **and solar-plus-storage energy systems.**

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8 WHEREAS, San Francisco's 2021 Climate Action Plan establishes a goal of reaching
9 net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, and specific goals in the energy sector of
10 providing 100% renewable electricity by 2025 and 100% renewable energy by 2040; and

11 WHEREAS, The 2021 Climate Action Plan calls specifically for investing in local
12 renewable energy and energy resilience and supporting the development of local renewable
13 electricity production by scaling up programs such as net metering, community solar, feed-in
14 tariffs, and battery storage; and

15 WHEREAS, Rooftop solar installations and battery storage support grid resilience in
16 the face of public safety power shutoffs and other electricity grid disruptions caused by
17 increasing wildfire risk and extreme weather events being driven by climate change; and

18 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission offers programs to ensure
19 low-income residents and marginalized communities can participate equitably in the transition
20 to clean energy, including through the GoSolarSF Program that provides incentives to install
21 rooftop solar in low-income communities; and

22 WHEREAS, Existing state law requires a city or county to approve administratively
23 applications to install solar energy systems through the issuance of a building permit or similar
24 non-discretionary permit; and

1 WHEREAS, Existing law requires every city, county, or city and county to develop a
2 streamlined permitting process for the installation of small residential rooftop solar energy
3 systems, as that term is defined; and

4 WHEREAS, Existing law prescribes and limits permit fees that a city or county may
5 charge for a residential and commercial solar energy system; and

6 WHEREAS, California State Senate Bill No. 379 would require every city, county, or
7 city and county to implement an online, automated permitting platform that verifies code
8 compliance and issues permits in real time for a solar energy system, as defined, that is no
9 larger than 38.4 kilowatts alternating current nameplate rating and an energy storage system,
10 as defined, paired with a solar energy system that is no larger than 38.4 kilowatts alternating
11 current nameplate rating; and

12 WHEREAS, The bill would prescribe a compliance schedule for satisfying these
13 requirements, with cities and counties with populations greater than 50,000 required to satisfy
14 the requirements by September 30, 2023; and

15 WHEREAS, The bill would require a city, county, or city and county to report to the
16 California Energy Commission (CEC) when it is in compliance with specified requirements,
17 and to self-certify their compliance with the bill's provisions when applying for specified funds
18 from the CEC, as specified; and

19 WHEREAS, In 2020, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), a division of
20 the U.S. Department of Energy, released free software called SolarAPP+ that cities and
21 counties can adopt to process permits for residential solar energy systems; and

22 WHEREAS, The California Energy Commission is operating a program to deploy \$20
23 million in grants to help cities and counties adopt online automated permitting systems such
24 as SolarAPP+; and

1 WHEREAS, Jurisdictions such as Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Sonoma County,
2 Stockton, and Benicia have successfully deployed SolarAPP+ and San Jose, Los Angeles,
3 Alameda County and Vacaville have adopted similar automated permitting software and
4 reduced permit review time; now, therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
6 hereby urges passage of California State Senate Bill No. 379; and be it

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Department of
8 Building Inspection, the San Francisco Fire Department, and other relevant permitting
9 agencies to move swiftly to implement automated solar permitting platforms to reduce permit
10 review time for solar energy and battery storage systems; and be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board
12 to transmit copies of this resolution to San Francisco's state legislative delegation, Assembly
13 Speaker Anthony Rendon, Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins, Governor Gavin
14 Newsom, and to the City Lobbyist upon passage.