

# Integrating Climate, Public Health, and Environmental Justice in Siting Decisions

**Become a Co-sponsor of [HD3679](#), [SD1418](#)**

**Sponsors: Representative Madaro, Senator Boncore**

All residents of Massachusetts have a right to a clean and healthy environment. Yet, too often polluting power plants, electrical substations, and gas compressor stations are concentrated in communities where people of color, low-income people, and limited English proficient speakers live and work. These environmental justice (EJ) populations experience higher rates of pollution, disease, and other public health emergencies. COVID-19 has further shown that high concentrations of pollution can lead to increased mortality from respiratory disease.

Decisions on where to locate energy facilities play a critical role in managing pollution and safeguarding communities. But the Energy Facilities Siting Board (Siting Board) needs to be required to consider EJ, public health, and climate change as part of its deliberations. The Massachusetts Siting Reform Bill will protect vulnerable communities, provide clear guidance to the and ensure that everyone's voice is heard. The bill will:

- ✓ **Add EJ, public health, and climate** to the Siting Board's responsibilities.
- ✓ **Require community engagement** prior to filing **for environmental or Siting Board review** of a petition to construct a generating facility or an oil, gas, or substation facility.
- ✓ **Require a cumulative impact assessment and an EJ impact statement** before approval of any electricity generating facility or oil, gas, or substation facility.
- ✓ **Prohibit the approval** of electricity generating facilities or substations if the EJ impact statement shows that they will result in public health or other harms to EJ populations.
- ✓ **Lower the thresholds** for what projects are subject to Siting Board review from 100 megawatts to 35 megawatts.

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EJ Legislation Table: Neighbor to Neighbor; GreenRoots; Alternatives for Community & Environment; Coalition for Social Justice; Conservation Law Foundation; Clean Water Action; Community Action Works; MA Climate Action Network, Environmental League of MA; Green Energy Consumers Alliance; Better Future Project; Sierra Club of MA, North American Indian Center of Boston; 350 MA; Groundwork Lawrence; Lawyers for Civil Rights; Healthcare Without Harm, Union of Concerned Scientists, and UU Mass Action.