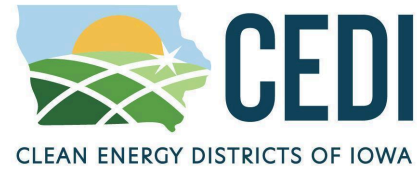


## 2025 ENERGY POLICY SERIES

Questions? [contact@cleanenergydistricts.org](mailto:contact@cleanenergydistricts.org)



## Renewable Energy Siting Reform

### What To Do

1. **Establish statewide standards for utility-scale renewable energy siting** (both wind and solar) that ensure Iowa is “open for business”, and owns the clean energy future
2. **Reform and simplify the taxation and revenue formulas** so that local units of government have clarity around the economic benefits from utility-scale renewable energy
3. **Adopt a uniform “standard model” that sets base siting standards**, plus an “enhanced community benefit” siting model that counties can voluntarily adopt, which includes:
  - a. Enhanced revenue stream to local government, from tax surcharge
  - b. Siting standards that are less restrictive/more flexible than standard model, but also include ...
  - c. Natural resource enhancements such as pollinator plantings; solar design to maximize agricultural options; landscape diversity; and recreational elements
4. **Consider state incentives for the connection of clean energy resources on the distribution grid** (“behind the substation”), to maximize local investment and reliability

### Why Do It

- County level ordinances effectively blocking utility scale renewable projects are putting Iowa on the road to becoming a failed solar state, in stark contrast to our wind legacy  
[Freedom, Prosperity, and Strength: why limiting solar in rural Iowa is a bad idea](#) by Brian Krambeer (CEO of MiEnergy REC) and Andy Johnson (CEDI) | *The Des Moines Register*  
[Iowa's Rural Prosperity Through Solar Is Under Attack](#) by Warren McKenna (former Manager of Farmers Electric Cooperative) and Andy Johnson (CEDI) | *The Des Moines Register*
- Solar plus storage is the most cost-effective clean energy resource capable of scaling quickly to address demand growth and reliability needs on the Iowa grid  
[Clean Grid Alliance Iowa Fact Sheets](#)
- Property rights matter: wind and solar leases are voluntary, they are lucrative, and landowners have rights to use their land to site renewable energy projects  
[Measuring the Economic Impacts of Utility Scale Solar in Ohio](#) | Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs (2020)
- Of Iowa's 30 million acres of cropland, 7M are already farmed for energy production via ethanol; building as much solar as we have wind energy (~14GW) would take less than 100,00 acres, or less than 0.3% of cropland, and promote resource conservation
- Community prosperity and resilience will be increased through the placement of energy resources on the distribution grid, especially when these resources are locally owned and managed, such as by rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities  
[Explained: Fundamentals of Power Grid Reliability and Clean Electricity](#) | US DOE National Renewable Energy Lab (2024)

*The Clean Energy Districts of Iowa enables locally led clean energy prosperity and climate stewardship through county level clean energy districts and state level policy advocacy. Clean Energy Districts create healthier, wealthier communities today and for future generations. More at [cleanenergydistricts.org](https://cleanenergydistricts.org).*