



October 5, 2018

Dear MAEEAC Councilors,

We are Local Chamber CEO's from Neponset Valley, Metro South, Newton Needham, Cape Ann, and Orleans. Collectively, we represent almost 3,500 businesses in the Commonwealth.

As Chamber executives, we are at the forefront of advocating for the economic growth of our communities, and we recognize that energy efficiency is an increasingly important issue for our member businesses.

We would like to thank the MAEEAC, the Program Administrators, and the DOER for your work on the 2019-2021 Three Year Plan. We appreciate all your hard work and commitment to furthering energy efficiency within the Commonwealth. In order for Massachusetts to continue to be a national leader, however, we believe it is essential to increase the engagement of the small and medium business community in the Mass Save program.

We appreciate that over the last year, the council and PAs solicited important feedback from members of the business community and chamber executives about ways to improve implementation of SMB efficiency programs. Unfortunately, this important feedback was not included in the most recent draft.

We are writing to encourage you, once again, to better facilitate the inclusion of the Commonwealth's small and medium businesses in the Mass Save Program. Chambers have a unique vantage point what small and medium size businesses need to take advantage of the Mass Save program.

We present the following recommendations for your consideration.

1. We think it is important to have a team to help with program implementation in the small business/ hard to reach space. While we are extremely motivated to help our members take advantage of energy efficiency, we think having a “Small Business Ambassador team” (recommended at the beginning of the three-year planning), would be beneficial in helping local business organizations with program awareness, lead generation, and ultimately increased program participation.
2. We also think it is important to provide marketing support (to Chambers and assigned energy vendors) as well as ample materials that are jargon free and easy to understand. As non-energy experts, this support will help us educate and empower our member companies to take advantage of these important program.
3. We feel it is essential to expand planned outreach within the SMB community (moving beyond main streets campaigns) and work with local business and municipal groups to customize appropriate outreach strategies and tactics. This strategy is one that has been highlighted in the plan for the other hard to reach communities. We feel it makes sense to apply it to the SMB community as well. Both the Newton Needham and Cape Ann Chambers have engaged in this strategy and have met with success. We would like to see more opportunities for other chambers to work with their local utility, vendor, and municipality, to increase program awareness and participation within their local business communities.
4. We’d like to see increased savings goals for the SMB community that are more in line with those recommended by the MAEEAC consultants. We feel strongly that there is a lot of untapped potential in the SMB community and a strong desire from local businesses to take advantage of energy efficiency programs.
5. We hope program offerings can be standardized so they are the same across PAs. This is really important to us as many local Chambers cover businesses across different utility territories. Being able to promote the same program to all our members would make a big difference.
6. We need to surmount known participation barriers: we could do this by building trust and awareness and clarifying program offerings and benefits to reduce confusion. It would be good to see a comprehensive plan on how the PAs intend to overcome known barriers working with chambers, local groups, etc.
7. There is a need to create program standards for following up with SMBs who have inquired about the program to ensure leads are converted into audits and eventually upgrades.
8. Finally, please ensure comprehensive upgrades are being promoted to SMBs (not just lighting upgrades).

Thank you for your time. We appreciate your consideration in including these recommendations in the next iteration of the three-year plan. We look forward to working together with you to help the Commonwealth continue to remain a success story for energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Cooney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Cooney".

Christopher Cooney  
President and CEO, Metro South Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Reibman". The signature is written in a bold, cursive style, with the first name "Greg" being significantly larger and more stylized than the last name "Reibman".

Greg Reibman  
President, Newton Needham Regional Chamber

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Riehl". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Ken" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Riehl".

Ken Riehl  
Chief Executive Officer, Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Noelle Pina". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Noelle" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Pina".

Noelle Pina  
Executive Director, Orleans Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J O'Rourke". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Thomas" being larger and more prominent than the last name "O'Rourke".

Thomas J O'Rourke  
President and CEO, Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce