MA ENERGY EFFICIENCY ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 22, 2025
In-Person Meeting - 499 Plantation St, Worcester, MA

Councilors Present:	Greg Abbe, Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony, Brian Beote, Kyle Murray, Sierra Moll and Matt Saunders (for William Rose), Daniel Leary, Sharon Weber, Meg Lusardi, Brooks Winner, Martijn Fleuren, Mary Downs for Cindy Carroll, Margaret Song (for Maggie Downey), Erin Engelmeyer (for Kate Peters), Chris Porter, Kim Dragoo, Jillian Winterkorn, Robert Rio, Audrey Hettinger, Paul Johnson, Steven Miller, Alexis Washburn, Michael Ferrante, Tim Costa
Councilors Absent:	Mary Wambui, Tim Costa
Consultants Present:	Adrian Caesar, Gretchen Calcagni, Griff Keating, Margie Lynch
DOER Staff Present:	Ina Dasso, Jo Ann Bodemer, Rachel Evans, Benjamin Silverman

1. Call to Order

Bodemer, acting on behalf of the Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

Virtual Meeting Procedure
Bodemer reviewed the virtual EEAC meeting procedure:

1. The Council meeting will be recorded, for administrative purposes only.
2. All attendees except for Councilors and presenters will remain muted for the duration of the meeting.
3. Councilors should hold comments until the end of presentations, but Councilors and other participants should speak instead of using any chat function.
4. Councilors who disconnect from meetings need to announce when they rejoin.
5. All Council votes will be taken by roll call.

Bodemer said that the Council hosted the meeting in Worcester to allow for public attendance by residents from the Western part of Massachusetts and some attended in person to provide public comment.

2. Public Comment

Weezy Waltz (Action for Equity and Browning the Greenspace)
Waltz said that she appreciated the work the EEAC has done to highlight groups of people that have been excluded from Mass Save programs. Waltz said that a technical paper reviewed common practice for background checks that limit risks while creating an inclusive environment, and only a small percentage of Massachusetts residents have convictions, and Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) disproportionately impacts Black and Brown residents. Waltz said that research shows that the broadest possible CORI exclusion does not eliminate risk because there is risk in excluding too many people. Waltz said that in over forty-eight years, only 3,000 cases have been judged to be negligent hiring, but the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission receives 100,000 discrimination complaints annually. Waltz said that the background check system used in the programs should limit risk factors on both sides depending on the jobs, and she suggested implementing the Fair Chance Hiring framework, a general set of hiring principles matching the person's background, the time of the offense, and the particular job they will apply for.

Alisha Harrington (Browning the Greenspace)
Harrington said that Browing the Greenspace (BTG) seeks to remove barriers and increase opportunities for Black and Brown job seekers and business owners. Harrington said that Mass CEC has provided workforce grants, and BTG is working to provide access to clean energy jobs to those who have been excluded. Harrington said that the current CORI process impacts a quarter of Massachusetts residents, and due to the radicalized nature of the criminal justice system, these broad-based exclusions disproportionately exclude Black and Brown residents and business owners from work opportunities. Harrington said that continued exclusion of CORI-impacted individuals prevents Massachusetts from meeting its climate goals and perpetuates inequity, but when we open pathways for all residents to contribute their talents, we increase our capacity to create a clean and equitable future.

Steve Cowell (Northeast Energy Efficiency and Electrification Council)
Cowell said that there have been two recent proposals from the governor's Affordability Legislation and the State Auditor's Report that would impact Mass Save. These are:

1. To expand Mass Save to include decarbonization as a key part of its strategy.
2. To modify Mass Save in program areas and to remove operation of Mass Save from the utilities.

Cowell said that the Auditor's report did not include the current Plan, which addresses many of the concerns in the report. Cowell said that both proposals would impact the programs and proposed that the EEAC discuss a response and input to the proposals at the next meeting or in a special committee meeting. Cowell agreed that including decarbonization and helping to reach the state's climate goals is a promising idea, but he disagreed with the proposal to remove the utilities as program administrators (PAs).

Mia Johnson (Action for Equity)
Johnson said that she works directly with CORI-impacted individuals who cannot access clean energy jobs and emphasized that energy efficiency jobs should be accessible to all who are able

to complete the work because Mass Save is publicly funded by ratepayers. Johnson highlighted a case where an individual, after earning HVAC technician certification and securing employment with a utility, was terminated due to a failed CORI check. Johnson said that there are high certification program graduation rates for CORI-impacted individuals, but they are unable to find job placements. Johnson said that this is an opportunity to grow and strengthen the industry by aligning job opportunities with the backgrounds and qualifications of community members, which is essential for supporting the communities and their residents.

Wambui joined the virtual meeting at 1:24 PM.

3. Council Business and Updates

August 6 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Bodemer asked if the Executive Committee had any revisions to the August EEAC Executive Committee meeting minutes. No Executive Committee members proposed edits. DOER, as Chair of the Executive Committee, approved the August EEAC Executive Committee meeting minutes as submitted.

August 20 EEAC Meeting Minutes
Bodemer indicated that a sentence about a data-related follow up was modified to attribute the comment to Downey. Bodemer asked if the Council had any revisions to the August EEAC meeting minutes. No Council members proposed edits. DOER, as Chair of the Council, approved the August EEAC meeting minutes as amended.

DOER Updates
Bodemer announced that the Council posted an RFQ for consultant services, bids will be shared with the Executive Committee, and there will be an executive session in November to select the consultant team for the next three years. Bodemer said that three Equity Working Group (EWG) community-based organization seats will be up for election this December and asked the Council to encourage any interested parties to submit letters of interest. Bodemer said that the EWG Council seat currently held by Kyle Murray will also be open, and voting Councilors can submit letters of interest by December 5. Bodemer said that there will be a vote at the December EEAC meeting to appoint the EWG member.

Washburn asked if there is a job description for the EWG seats that can be shared with interested parties. Bodemer replied that there should be suitable language in the EWG charter.

Murray said he hoped to be reelected and asked if he needed to submit a new letter. Bodemer confirmed.

Bodemer announced that the PAs filed a quarterly budget report following the end of the second quarter, and the next report will be filed on November 15. Bodemer said that there may not be another technical session because the DPU staff and the PAs had a productive conversation.

Program Administrator (PA) Updates

Porter, on behalf of the PAs, provided updates on the 2025 Mass Save Climate Leader's Awards Ceremony, fourth Supplier Engagement Summit, and Residential Heat Pump Rate, which is scheduled to launch on November 1. Porter indicated that nearly 100,000 households will be auto-enrolled into the heat-pump rate that will apply to all electric consumption from Nov 1, 2025-Apr 30, 2026.

Commissioner Mahony said that National Grid and Eversource are developing a manual enrollment process for customers who have heat pumps but did not receive a rebate, and Unitil's manual enrollment is already live. Commissioner Mahony said that Eversource's manual enrollment would be launched on October 23, and Porter added that National Grid would go live within one week.

Murray said that there may be a lack of initial customer enrollment because some customers do not monitor their energy bills. Porter said that it will be a rolling application process, and the PAs are coordinating with the media on outreach as well as conducting their own marketing. Porter said that the PAs are confident that enrollment will accelerate once manual enrollment is live. Murray said that the PAs have completed an enormous amount of work to implement the heat pump rate in a short time frame.

Wambui said that she appreciates the energy affordability advocates, and there should be more efforts to benefit hard-to-reach customers. Wambui said that there are many eligible customers who have not enrolled in the discount rate, so the PAs need to do more than just outreach.

Johnson asked the status of the sixteen weatherization contractors who did not receive work from the programs. Bodemer replied that this topic was not on the agenda.

Beote said that the Community Action Partnership (CAP) agencies and LEAN are working with contractors to automatically enroll customers at the time of heat pump installation. Porter said that the online form is one page, so the most daunting piece may be photographing the heat pump and invoices.

Abbe said that autoenrollment in the discount rate was almost ready for people who receive aid from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities or the federal government.

Fleuren asked if the PAs had updates on insultation jobs or Home Energy Assessments (HEAs) to date.

Winner said that he was looking forward to collaborating with the Community First Partnerships (CFPs) and the PAs to make sure renters are aware of the heat pump rate and its enrollment methods.

Bodemer announced that Maggie Downey received a Climate Leader Award.

Winner said that the Supplier Engagement Summit was a great event that supported supplier diversity and equitable job access and commended the PAs.

4. Mass Save Customer Pathways

PA Presentation
Engelmeyer and Chris Lavallee, on behalf of the PAs, provided a walkthrough of the Residential customer journey through various Mass Save pathways. Engelmeyer and Lavallee described customer points of entry, PA messaging channels, and customer journeys for different types of customers installing heat pumps.

Council Discussion
Washburn asked how the decarbonization consultation differs from an HEA. Engelmeyer said that decarbonization consultation is completed virtually and focuses on heat pumps, how they work, and reviewing heat pump bids from different contractors.

Abbe asked if there is a customer path for someone who calls their utility complaining about high bills. Engelmeyer confirmed and said that this would be expanded in one month once the new statewide solutions center is established and can better direct customers to the energy efficiency programs. Abbe said that the Residential heat pump journey seems to be proactive and asked what this looks like for a customer with a failing system. Engelmeyer said that a partial displacement does not require an HEA or a decarbonization consultation, so the replacement can be expedited. Porter said that this can depend on seasonality and the urgency of the situation, but ideally the PAs want to reach customers before their systems fail.

Wambui said that it would be more efficient to conduct the HEA and decarbonization consultation together. Porter said that the combination of what is offered currently meets the legislative requirements, and the decarbonization consultation provides targeted conversation on heat pumps. Porter said that the PAs do not want the two services to be duplicative. Bodemer asked if the decarbonization consultation may be eliminated as the Mass Save solutions center grows in technical ability. Porter said that the solutions center will not provide as detailed technical support as is available during the decarbonization consultation. Engelmeyer added that many customers use the consultation to compare heat pump quotes and understand the technical details. Wambui said that Mass Save does not seem to be responsive to the Commonwealth's need for a comprehensive HEA that addresses energy efficiency, decarbonization, renewable energy, and energy storage, and she encouraged the PAs to consider this approach. Commissioner Mahony said that while the HEA and the decarbonization consultation are different, the EEAC should explore the conversation around more comprehensive offerings given the cost of expanding the scope of Mass Save to include renewables and energy storage. Porter agreed and said that the Mass Save solutions center will be able to answer general questions about energy storage, and although there is no onsite audit, the PAs are working on educational materials for resources not directly supported by Mass Save.

Winner said that the Boston Energy Saver program was launching in one week, and it should align with the customer journeys that were outlined by the PAs. Winner said that the program prioritizes language access and multilingual capabilities, and he is interested in exploring the journey of customers who do not speak English. Bodemer said that this question would be explored during the customer panel.

Porter said that the PAs have a language access plan, and Chris Lavallee can provide an update.

Wambui asked whether the customer journey describes potential savings from energy upgrades and if the two assessments provide information on the heat pump rate to help customers who may be hesitant to fuel switch. Engelmeyer said that potential savings are included in the HEA report, but heat pumps are reviewed during the decarbonization consultation. Engelmeyer said that Mass Save has a heat pump cost calculator where customers can enter their data to estimate their bill savings from switching to a heat pump. Porter added that the PAs are adding language about the heat pump rate on the calculator. Wambui reiterated that this suggests that Massachusetts needs a comprehensive HEA that addresses all components of clean energy and better estimates bill impacts considering renewable energy, energy storage, and heat pump rates. Porter clarified that the calculator already exists, and the PAs cannot know what individual customer rates are because they may go through aggregators or have a range of factors that influence their effective energy rates.

5. Mass Save Customer Experience

Customer Panel

Jeff Talmadge, Victor Sulkowski, and Abbe Cohen Dvornik, three Mass Save customers, characterized their experiences participating in the programs.

Downey posed three questions to the Mass Save Customer Panel:

1. How were you introduced to the Mass Save programs and how did they actually enter the programs?

Dvornik said that she called contractors asking about mini split heat pumps for air conditioning, and they recommended Mass Save, so did her friends and family. Dvornik said that she then discovered whole-home conversion for heat pumps and other energy efficiency measures.

Talmadge said that he was a Cape Light Compact (CLC) customer and had worked with Downey many times in the past. Talmadge said that he was concerned about fossil fuels and installed solar panels, and he became interested in electrification when Mass Save began focusing on it. Talmadge said that he selected a CLC vendor for whole home heat pump replacement, and the contractor worked on the house for about three weeks. Talmadge said that even though heat pumps are expensive, the process and results are great.

Sulkowski said that he lives on a small family farm that he has owned since the 1980s. Sulkowski said that he sought out Mass Save, received an HEA, and completed some insulation work in 2014. Sulkowski said that he installed solar panels a few years later, but he was still spending over $1,000 per month on gas during peak months and had no air conditioning. Sulkowski said that he completed another HEA in 2022 and was able to install a geothermal system with the combination of federal tax incentives, Mass Save rebates, a heat loan, and a clean energy credit union out of Colorado. Sulkowski said that the combination of geothermal and solar fully meets his heating needs, and having air conditioning in the summer is a significant bonus.

2. Tell us about the projects you completed and what financing tools you leveraged, like HEAT Loans.

All three panelists stated that they used heat loans when completing their energy upgrades.

3. What can the PAs do to improve the program, what worked well, and what did not work well?

Dvornik said that the decarbonization consultation was extremely beneficial, stating that she had completed an HEA previously and had friends with prior heat pump knowledge.

Talmadge said that he agreed with Wambui's comment about a more integrated approach to clean energy. Talmadge said that the federal government is moving away from clean energy, so it is becoming increasingly incumbent on the state to fill the gap. Talmadge agreed that there needs to be a comprehensive set of solutions that address renewables, energy storage, and electric vehicles in addition to heating and cooling. Talmadge said that he paid for a Tesla Power Wall and a solar installation without program incentives.

Sulkowski agreed with prior comments and said that the cost element is important, but an integrated approach is necessary, particularly for older homes and homes without air conditioning. Sulkowski said that the incentives for heat pump water heaters should be higher so that customers can install whole-home heating solutions. Sulkowski said that maintaining work quality and verification is also important, and he noted that some components of his insulation work were poorly done. Sulkowski said that expediting rebates is important because many contractors will not bear the project cost while the rebate is pending. Sulkowski said that the PAs need to emphasize that everyone pays into this program already, so they should take advantage of the benefits because not everyone will care about the environment, but everyone cares where their money is going. Downey agreed that decarbonization and climate are not priorities for everyone.

Council Discussion

Commissioner Mahony asked if the customers received weatherization services in addition to their heating system work. Dvornik said that her house felt cold each winter, and every set of upgrades helped. Dvornik said that she had received poor insulation work at one point, but a new contractor fixed the issue, and the house is now effectively air sealed. Sulkowski said that he did insulation work in 2014 to remediate air drafts and saw notable bill impacts, and he recently completed additional weatherization to qualify for the whole-home rebate. Sulkowski said that the additional insulation makes a significant difference in terms of comfort and on bills, so he is glad it was required for the heat pump installation. Talmadge said that he completed a major renovation ten years ago and did not have to install additional insulation. Sulkowski suggested that the PAs support incentives for energy recovery ventilators, stating that they are important post air sealing.

Winner asked Sulkowski, a former renter in Boston, if he had previously thought that Mass Save was only for homeowners. Sulkowski said that he was aware of the program given his interests

in the trades, but he was not concerned about mitigating energy bills when he was younger. Winner suggested that the EEAC should host a similar panel for renters at a future meeting.

6. 2022-2024 Three-Year Plan: Term Report

EEAC Consultant Presentation
Calcagni, Keating, Lynch, and Caesar, on behalf of the EEAC Consultants, presented the 2022-2024 PA Term Report, including priority themes for the term, portfolio results, sector highlights, and areas for improvement and further consideration.

Council Discussion
Murray asked why heat pump water heater performance is so low. Lynch said that a customer panelist referenced that the incentive may not be high enough. Porter said that heat pump water heaters are not as impactful of an investment as heat pump space heaters, so the PAs launched an online marketplace to connect contractors with customers. Lynch said that not every home is appropriate for a heat pump water heater, so the Income Eligible program focuses on proactively identifying, supporting, and educating homes that are appropriate.

Johnson said that only 30-40% of potential homes have been weatherized so far. Lynch said that this is her recollection for gas homes, but there is even more potential in electric and delivered fuels homes. Lynch said that this was not an exhaustive potential analysis, and Mass Save has been offering weatherization incentives since the 1990s but the data starts in 2013. Lynch said that given the significant ramp in budget recently, the EEAC Consultants believe that the bulk of weatherization work has occurred recently. Johnson asked how the $12 million for workforce development was spent. Jennifer Applebaum from Mass CEC said that the funding was split across grants related to equity workforce programs.

Weber said that the Council needs this information when developing the next Three-Year Plan, and she requested that the PAs work to finalize this data by the end of the second year of the Plan so that it can inform the next planning process.

Abbe said that replacing delivered fuels with a heat pump is economically advantageous to the customer, but performance in this area was low. Porter said that performance is relative to goal, and the goal for delivered fuels displacement was much higher than the goal for natural gas displacement. Porter said that customers are concerned about the high cost of electricity and cannot see past the short-term costs, but the heat pump rate may change this. Abbe said that he was interested to see how the heat pump rate impacts adoption over time.

Winner said that increasing investment in workforce development emphasizes the importance of the Council's collaboration with Mass CEC and points to the importance of removing barriers to entering the workforce. Winner said that if the people completing the training cannot secure employment, then the training is not an effective use of funding, so the EEAC needs to continue working on the hiring process side as well. Winner said that the program will never meet its weatherization goals if there are not enough staff members who can speak to folks in their own language, have cultural competency, and are trusted community members.

Fleuren said that there will be improvement in heat pump water heater performance as the implementation process is simplified and vendors can start presenting them as an option during HEAs. Fleuren said that if there is a need not being met, it is because the process set up for customers and partners is too onerous compared to the fixed costs if they do not go through with the measure. Fleuren said that if the goal is to install more heat pump water heaters, the PAs need to make it worthwhile for the customers and contractors to go through the process of installing them.

Johnson said that the DPU ordered that there should be an efficient use of resources to minimize customer bill impacts and asked if the PAs have considered reducing the weatherization customer incentive from 75% to 60%. Johnson said that this would free up funds to address the large block of homes that have not yet been reached and achieve more savings statewide. Porter said that the PAs are budget constrained and considering all viable options, but there are concerns that reducing the incentive would impact many customers' ability to participate in the program. Porter said that the PAs are thinking about this and welcome the conversation.

7. Adjournment

Bodemer, on behalf of the Chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:01 PM.

Meeting Materials:

- Official Meeting Notice
- Meeting Link
- Agenda
- August 6, 2025 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- August 20, 2025 EEAC Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- October PA Updates
- Mass Save Residential Customer Journey
- C-Team 2022-2024 PA Term Report Presentation