



## Solar Policy Report Card: 10 Sunny States Fail

by SI Staff  
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Some of the sunniest states in the U.S. are actively blocking rooftop solar development through overtly lacking and destructive policy landscapes, according to report from the Center for Biological Diversity, a nonprofit conservation group.

The report highlights 10 states – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin – that account for more than 35% of the total rooftop solar technical potential in the contiguous U.S. but represent less than 6% of total installed distributed solar capacity.

“Thanks to weak and nonexistent policies, the distributed solar markets in these states have never been given a chance to shine,” says Greer Ryan, sustainability research associate with the center and author of the report. “There’s room for improvement in solar policies across all 50 states, but it’s especially shameful to see the sunniest states fail to lead the transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy.”

State	Overall Policy Grade	Rooftop PV Technical Potential: Rank of Contiguous U.S.	Estimated Distributed PV Installed Capacity: Rank of all states
Alabama	F	19	45
Florida	F	3	14
Georgia	F	10	21
Indiana	F	13	35
Michigan	F	8	26
Oklahoma	F	18	44
Tennessee	F	14	25
Texas	F	2	12
Virginia	F	11	29
Wisconsin	F	16	30

The report assigns a policy grade to all 50 states based on the presence and strength of key policies that have aided solar expansion in the country’s leading solar markets, as well as policy and regulatory barriers that are used to hinder the distributed solar industries. The report says these grades, along with the technical potential for distributed solar expansion in each state (based on data from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory), determine which states were the country’s worst offenders.

According to the report, three of the 10 highlighted states lack mandatory statewide net-metering policies, possibly the most important policy model in place in the U.S. that allows for solar customers to connect with the grid.

Only three of the 10 states allow for third-party ownership of solar panels – a financing model that has fostered a distributed solar boom by allowing for those who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford solar panels outright to be able to install them on their property, the report continues. Nine lack strong interconnection laws, making the process of installing solar panels harder for homeowners, business owners and third-party companies alike.

This analysis follows recent high-profile net-metering policy fights in Nevada and California, two leading solar states. The report says more than half of all states with net-metering programs in place saw efforts to weaken or eliminate these programs in 2015, despite the fact that it was the hottest year on record.

“These solar policy fights are becoming more common at a time when we should be expanding rooftop solar as quickly as possible,” comments Ryan. “By blocking solar expansion, states threaten the swift transition to a just and fully renewable energy system that's needed to stave off the worst impacts of climate change and protect the health of communities, wildlife and the planet.”

The full report, titled “Throwing Shade: 10 Sunny States Blocking Distributed Solar Development,” is available [here](#).