



# Solar Panel Stewardship and Takeback Program

## The problem

Washington's clean energy transition is facing a possible setback if a provision in a 2017 law intended to boost recycling and proper disposal of solar panels goes into effect in July 2025. Beginning July 1, 2025, solar panels may not be sold in Washington unless the manufacturer of those panels has a stewardship plan approved by Ecology. Ecology believes a majority of solar panel manufacturers will be out of compliance.

The law (RCW 70A.510.010) establishes a solar panel stewardship and takeback program that requires Washington's solar panel industry to share the responsibility of managing what remains of these units after their intended use is complete. The program would be paid for by manufacturers.

Rather than participating in a takeback program, some manufacturers have already chosen to not sell solar panels in Washington. Installer groups and large project developers are worried the law will disrupt the supply of panels available for deployment in Washington.

This concern is supported by the Department of Commerce, which says a disruption could increase the cost of panels while decreasing their availability. This could limit the reach of a new federally funded program focused on installing solar to benefit income qualified households across the state.

Stakeholder meetings identified several problems with the law, but failed to reach consensus on potential solutions or a path forward. Ecology has determined that the law is unimplementable.

## Ecology's proposal

Ecology is requesting a delay in the effective dates in the law. This will allow the industry to legally continue operating in the state while solutions are being developed.

A delay will also allow for the creation of a facilitated advisory committee to identify problems in the law and develop recommendations to fix them.

Work of the advisory committee will culminate with a report to the legislature in December 2026.

## Why this matters

Washington state has been a leader in the national transition to policies that move America towards 100% clean electricity, capping carbon pollution, and electrifying transportation.

Modifying the law will make the takeback program stronger and remove barriers to achieving the goals established in the Washington Clean Energy Transformation Act (Chapter 19.405 RCW).

If current law stands, it could impair the solar industry in Washington state.

A delay will give Ecology, stakeholders, and all other interested parties the tools and time to resolve the issues with the current law.

## Related information

Read about [Ecology's legislative priorities for 2025](#).



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