

Introduction

There are a number of actions that governors, legislators, regulators, utilities, third-party providers, and corporations can take to support the procurement of renewable energy by large customers.

Corporate customers are looking to control their own destiny by leveraging a landscape of renewable investment market choice options, especially as many of them work to power their operations with 100% renewable energy. Choice can take many forms, depending on factors such as whether a state is regulated or deregulated, or is part of a regional organized market.

While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, the following actions at the state level would go a long way in supporting the growth of corporate renewables procurement

1. Remove Barriers

Remove barriers to corporate deployment of both onsite and offsite renewable installations

DG-specific fixed charges should be eliminated in states that allow them, in favor of more balanced rate structures. The grid offers services to all energy users, but high fees or long processes for interconnection, high standby charges, and other roadblocks meant to discourage distributed generation must not be allowed. Interconnection and net metering policies should encourage DG market development, and should not present overly burdensome restrictions for DG customers. Laws and regulations should also encourage offsite RE. Siting restrictions, taxes on renewable generation, and other barriers to expanded renewable opportunities should be taken down. In their place should be incentives and rate structures that encourage the integration of more renewables – both distributed and centralized – onto the grid.

2. Support the development of next-generation

Support the development of next-generation options to purchase renewable energy through utilities in regulated markets

Many corporate buyers are looking for contracts that will help them save on energy costs or at least hedge against long-term price volatility. Utilities and corporations should work together to ensure that existing offerings meet these goals. The green tariffs currently in existence are first-generation products and could be improved as companies and utilities gain more experience from them. They should be authorized beyond the five states where they are currently available, while being flexibly structured to meet the needs of their purchasers. Direct purchasing of utility-scale renewables is also a relatively new development that should be explored further. In states where these existing options do not meet customer needs, the parties should collaborate to create new products that do.

Powering Renewable Energy



3. Expand Energy Choices Options

Expand energy choice options for C&I customers in regulated markets.

In regulated states, where signing large-scale PPA agreements are not currently feasible, policymakers could explicitly authorize third-party PPAs and leases for distributed generation, enable community solar programs and support corporate participation in them, and/or authorize new green tariff



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4. Ensure that an adequate market exists

Ensure that an adequate market exists for renewable purchasing through both utilities and third-party programs.

Different institutional customers have different needs as they pursue their RE goals. States need to be comprehensive in their approach to providing options for expanded RE. States should not choose between setting up effective utility or third-party markets. Rather, they should strive to do both. Implementing both Action Points #2 and 3 will ensure that a strong market is available regardless of the avenue a customer wishes to go down to procure RE.

5. Ensure that RE in Markets can Scale

Ensure that RE in both regulated and deregulated markets can scale up rapidly.

A key action that governors, state legislators, and other policymakers can take is allowing the maximum amount of choice according to state laws, and making these options available as soon as possible. This involves a complex set of decisions, and policymakers will need to tailor their decisions to state laws. However, the main thrust of the effort should be to provide as much customer choice as possible, as soon as possible. States should also make renewable energy part of their economic development plans. By encouraging infrastructure construction, and helping companies find cost certainty on their electricity bills, RE development can be a boon to both existing and relocating businesses in any state.

