



# The Truth about Massachusetts' Green Communities Act

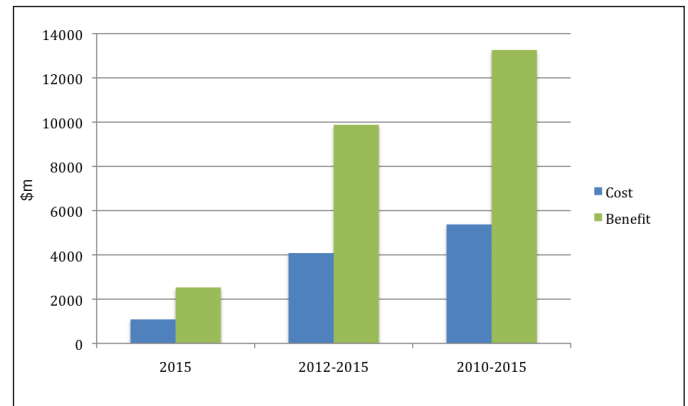
The Green Communities Act is:

Saving ratepayers money • Boosting Massachusetts' clean energy sector  
Spurring innovation and attracting investment • Creating new jobs

Myth: The GCA costs too much

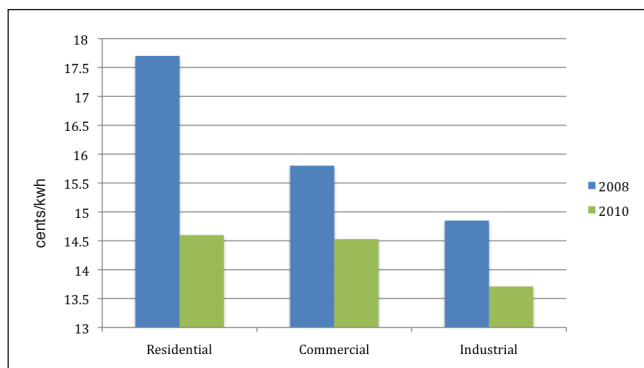
**Fact: The Green Communities Act is saving Massachusetts families and businesses billions of dollars**

- Over the next 4 years, GCA investments will deliver net savings of \$5.8 billion on energy bills.
- Ratepayer benefits under the GCA are projected to be nearly two and a half times greater than the costs of implementation. By 2015, an annual investment of \$1.1 billion will deliver \$2.5 billion in ratepayer benefits.
- These benefits far outweigh the costs.



Myth: Electric bills are going up

**Fact: Electric bills have gone down**



- Electric bills have been lower in 2009-2010 than they were in the pre-GCA years of 2006-2008, largely due to lower natural gas prices. Over time, GCA will save ratepayers money.
- Average residential rates dropped from 17.7 cents/kwh in 2008 to 14.6 cents/kwh in 2010, commercial rates went from 15.8 cents in 2008 to 14.53 cents in 2010 and industrial rates went from 14.85 cents to 13.71 cents in 2010.
- Massachusetts has gone from having the nation's 4th highest residential rates in 2008, to having the 11th highest residential rates in 2010.

Myth: We can meet our renewable energy targets by adding imported large hydro and efficiency

**Fact: Renewable energy standards are intended to spur innovation and investment in new renewable energy technologies**

- MA's clean energy targets have helped attract \$542 million in cleantech venture investment in 2011.
- Large hydro — especially imported large hydro — is a mature technology that doesn't need MA incentives.
- MA 2020 Clean Energy & Climate Plan envisions a mix of efficiency, renewables like wind/solar, and imported large hydro — it's not an "either / or" scenario.
- Efficiency already is prioritized; utilities must maximize investment in this cleanest/cheapest energy resource.

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Myth: Massachusetts' energy mix is fine the way it is. We don't need innovative policies like the GCA to change it.

**Fact: Because New England has no coal, oil, or natural gas, overreliance on fossil fuels leaves us especially vulnerable to price spikes and supply interruptions. The GCA helps by encouraging efficiency and energy diversification.**

- By boosting efficiency and in-state renewables, Massachusetts can import less fuel and hedge against price volatility and supply problems.
- Efficiency cuts the amount of power we need; renewable energy helps meet remaining needs with clean, sustainable energy supply.
- Importing less fossil fuel gives Massachusetts more control over its energy future.

Myth: The GCA is bad for the economy

**Fact: The GCA is boosting economic growth**

- As Gov. Patrick said in his State of the Commonwealth address, "the clean energy industry grew nearly 7 percent in Massachusetts last year, and added thousands of kilowatts of renewable generation and thousands of jobs – not by accident but because we passed the Green Communities Act and joined the world's fundamental shift towards efficiency and renewable energy."
- Massachusetts Clean Energy Center study found 64,000 clean energy jobs in state, and growing.
- Massachusetts has attracted the second-largest concentration of clean energy venture capital in the country, thanks in part to strong policy signals like GCA.
- Clean energy is taking its place next to biotech and information technology as part of Massachusetts' innovation economy. GCA helps keep that momentum going.
- Massachusetts has established itself as a test bed for innovation and demonstration in the clean energy sector, which is growing fast worldwide—hitting a record \$260 billion in 2011 (according to Bloomberg New Energy Finance).

Myth: Energy efficiency is nice and all, but it doesn't make much of a difference.

**Fact: The cheapest power plant is the one you don't have to build. The GCA helps curb the need for more energy and new power plants, saving ratepayers money.**



## Fact Sheet

2011's Top Ten States	
1	Massachusetts
2	California
3	New York
4	Oregon
5 (tie)	Vermont
5 (tie)	Washington
5 (tie)	Rhode Island
8 (tie)	Minnesota
8 (tie)	Connecticut
10	Maryland

- Massachusetts' 2008 energy policy reforms—including the GCA—have earned the state a #1 ranking by the American Council on an Energy Efficient Economy.
- Even those who don't participate directly in efficiency programs benefit as the programs reduce overall demand across the region and, consequently, the prices we pay for energy.
- Energy efficiency accounts for nearly 75 percent of new GCA investments.

**The bottom line: Massachusetts cannot afford to weaken the Green Communities Act.**