

# SC should embrace rooftop solar, energy efficiency

BY BRYAN CORDELL

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Many South Carolinians are realizing the economic upside of investing in solar panels and efficiency upgrades for their homes. The benefits, however, extend far beyond the savings that individual homeowners experience and include critically important implications for the resilience of our electric grid and ultimately our environment — things that all South Carolina citizens should care about and benefit from equally.

As solar technology gains more of a foothold in the Palmetto State, it's important to understand the full spectrum of benefits that solar provides. This is especially pertinent right now, as utility regulators are deciding the fate of Dominion's rooftop solar proposal and major utilities like Santee Cooper are planning for future energy generation.

To start from a system-wide perspective, a primary benefit

of residential solar is that it reduces the need for utilities to build and charge for new energy-generation facilities. To put it another way — in the long run, residential solar reduces a utility's "cost of service" which leads to lower costs for customers as well.

Solar positioned on rooftops provides the added benefit of being close to the point of energy consumption and also provides a distributed source of energy generation. Energy from rooftop systems is often used where it's produced, saving energy by reducing energy lost in transmission and distribution lines — lines that often run hundreds of miles to reach your home.

As a distributed source of energy creation, home solar also increases the resilience of our electric grid. Unlike a typical large-scale energy generation facility, rooftop solar is distributed across the state, making our grid less vulnerable to a single event threatening our access to electricity.