
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 233 (File 218, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING CONSUMER PROTECTIONS REGARDING RESIDENTIAL SOLAR AND ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS.

SUMMARY

Starting February 15, 2028, this bill requires sellers of residential solar photovoltaic or energy storage systems and their authorized sales representatives to:

1. only conduct in-person residential solicitations from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., or any shorter period set by a municipal ordinance (consumers and sellers can set a time to meet outside this timeframe);
2. carry a current, valid ID at all times during in-person residential solicitations that includes the person's name and other information the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) deems relevant; and
3. give consumers a handbook (which the bill requires DCP, with the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) and the task force described below, to develop) at the beginning of the first in-person solicitation at a consumer's residence or, if there is none, then before executing a sales agreement.

The bill requires these sellers to annually report, beginning by February 15, 2027, to DCP each person the seller has a business relationship with to provide financing, installation, or related consumer services in partnership with the seller that includes in-person interaction with consumers. DCP must set how the report is provided but the bill does not require disclosing any employee's identity.

The bill also specifies that the sale, lease, or rent of a residential solar photovoltaic or residential energy storage system is covered by the

Home Solicitation Sales Act and applies the bill's provisions to the act (such as invalidating a contract that includes a waiver of these rights by the consumer).

The bill reduces the penalty for violating the Home Solicitation Sales Act from a class C misdemeanor (punishable by up to three months in prison, a fine of up to \$500, or both) to a civil penalty of up to \$500 per violation and subjects the bill's new provisions to this penalty. The bill also makes (1) sales, leases, or rentals with a commission, rebate, or discount offered in violation of the bill's provisions voidable by the consumer and (2) any violation of the bill's provisions a Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act (CUTPA) violation.

It requires residential solar or energy storage lenders and providers to (1) give consumers a payoff statement or transfer document within seven days after a consumer's written request for one or (2) credit the consumer's account with \$250 if this deadline is not met.

Finally, the bill (1) expands the membership and charge of a task force, including requiring it to develop a handbook for consumers and (2) makes numerous technical and conforming changes to the Home Solicitation Sales Act.

*Senate Amendment "A" (1) changes the definition of "residential solar photovoltaic systems" applicable to provisions other than those on payoff statements and transfer documents by increasing their maximum capacity from 12 to 25 kilowatts and permitting them on multifamily dwellings; (2) changes the date by which sellers must comply with the bill's requirements from February 15, 2027, to February 15, 2028; (3) eliminates the requirement that sellers and representatives have a photo on their IDs; (4) requires in-home solicitation to end at 7 p.m. instead of 8 p.m.; (5) requires DCP with OCC and the task force, instead of OCC with the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), DCP, and interested parties, to develop the handbook, requires the handbook's completion by December 31, 2027, instead of December 31, 2026, requires its website posting by January 15, 2028, instead of January 15, 2027, requires its posting on PURA's and OCC's websites, and adds

distribution of the handbook related to renewable energy tariffs; and (6) adds the task force provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except the task force provisions are effective upon passage.

§ 1 — RESIDENTIAL SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND RESIDENTIAL ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS DEFINED

For purposes of the Home Solicitation Sales Act and the consumer handbook described below, the bill defines:

1. “residential solar photovoltaic systems” as equipment and devices (1) used primarily to collect solar energy and generate electricity that have a capacity of up to 25 kilowatts and (2) installed on the roof of a single family or multifamily home (with two to four units) in compliance with the State Building Code and
2. “residential energy storage systems” as commercially available technology that (1) absorbs and stores energy to later dispatch it and (2) is installed in a single family or two- to four-unit dwelling in compliance with the State Building Code.

§ 2 — CONSUMER HANDBOOK

By December 31, 2027, the bill requires DCP, with OCC and the task force, to develop a consumer handbook on home solicitation sales of residential solar photovoltaic and energy storage systems, including in-person sales at residences. The handbook must include:

1. guidance that helps consumers assess sales and marketing claims about these systems,
2. information on Home Solicitation Sales Act penalties, and
3. other information DCP deems relevant.

By January 15, 2028, the bill requires (1) DCP to post the handbook on its website for consumers of certain residential energy financing programs and renewable energy tariffs and (2) PURA and OCC to post it on their websites.

§ 10 — PAYOFF STATEMENTS AND TRANSFER DOCUMENTS

The bill requires certain lenders and providers, on a consumer's written request, to give the consumer a:

1. payoff statement with the unpaid balance on a residential solar or energy storage loan, including (a) principal, interest, and other charges under the loan documents and (b) daily interest on the unpaid principal, or
2. transfer document that allows the consumer to transfer to another person the consumer's rights and obligations under the terms of a residential solar or energy storage lease or loan agreement or residential power purchase agreement.

This applies to anyone who in the ordinary course of business extends credit to a consumer to finance the purchase of a residential solar or energy storage system, leases a system to a consumer, or enters an agreement with a consumer on the sale of electricity from a system.

If the consumer is not given the statement or document within seven days after the request, the consumer's account must be credited \$250.

The bill allows DCP to adopt regulations to implement these provisions.

The bill's provisions on payoff statements and transfer documents apply to the same types of residential energy storage systems as described above. But these provisions apply to fewer residential solar photovoltaic systems as they are only applicable to systems with a lesser capacity of up to 12 kilowatts and do not include systems installed on a two- to four-unit multifamily home.

§ 11 — TASK FORCE

The bill expands the membership and charge of a task force studying consumer power purchase agreements for solar photovoltaic systems.

Under existing law, the task force must study ways to improve disclosure requirements and consumer protections related to purchase,

lease, or entering into power purchase agreements for solar photovoltaic systems, including whether special protections are needed for low-income consumers or senior citizens. The bill requires the task force to also study (1) licensing for contractors doing solar electricity work and (2) requirements for audits or other ways to ensure that these contractors and sellers comply with applicable laws.

The bill also requires the task force to develop a handbook that:

1. advises consumers on home solicitation sales of residential solar photovoltaic systems and residential energy storage systems, including in-person solicitations;
2. includes guidance to help consumers assess sales and marketing claims about these systems;
3. states the penalties applicable to sellers of these systems and their representatives; and
4. includes any other information the task force deems relevant.

The bill extends the due date for the task force's report to the Energy and Technology and General Law committees from January 1, 2026, to February 1, 2027.

Membership

The bill adds as members the chairpersons and ranking members of the Energy and Technology and General Law committees, or their designees. As under existing law, the other members are the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and DCP commissioners, or their designees; PURA chairperson, or his designee; consumer counsel, or her designee; the Connecticut Green Bank president, or his designee; two members appointed by the governor; and 10 members appointed by the six legislative leaders.

The bill makes the Energy and Technology and General Law committees' chairpersons, or their designees, the task force's chairpersons instead of a chairperson chosen among the task force

members by the House speaker and Senate president pro tempore.

BACKGROUND

CUTPA

By law, CUTPA prohibits businesses from engaging in unfair and deceptive acts or practices. It allows the DCP commissioner, under specified procedures, to issue regulations defining an unfair trade practice, investigate complaints, issue cease and desist orders, order restitution in cases involving less than \$10,000, impose civil penalties of up to \$5,000, enter into consent agreements, ask the attorney general to seek injunctive relief, and accept voluntary statements of compliance. It also allows individuals to sue. Courts may issue restraining orders; award actual and punitive damages, costs, and reasonable attorney's fees; and impose civil penalties of up to \$5,000 for willful violations and up to \$25,000 for a restraining order violation.

COMMITTEE ACTION

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/11/2026)

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 40 Nay 0 (04/10/2026)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 48 Nay 5 (04/17/2026)