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Bruce Burcat
MAREC Action

Bruce Burcat is the Executive Director of the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition, where he is responsible for MAREC Action's efforts to promote the growth and development of renewable energy in its 10 jurisdictions. Burcat, an attorney, has over 30 years of experience in the utility and energy regulatory fields.



Evan Vaughan
MAREC Action

Evan Vaughan serves as MAREC Action's Deputy Director. Prior to joining MAREC, Vaughan worked as a community relations consultant for an offshore wind project. His experience also includes positions with the American Wind Energy Association, International Emissions Trading Association and the World Wildlife Fund.

West Virginia's Renewable Energy Opportunity

West Virginia's biggest private sector employers – including Walmart, Toyota, Kroger, American Electric Power, Lowe's, and Procter & Gamble – want to buy renewable energy to power their operations. These companies are part of a global market trend toward clean energy, driven as much by the stable, low cost of solar and wind energy as it is by consumer preferences. Increasingly, corporate consumers of renewable energy are looking to source energy from the same geographic region as their factories, stores and data centers.

West Virginia, with its open-for-business attitude and a central location on the regional power grid, is poised to benefit considerably from the next wave of investment in renewables and from the businesses that



over \$1.5 billion in capital investment to West Virginia. Looking ahead, another 115 MW of new wind power is under construction, 54 MW is undergoing modernization and there are near-term plans for 180 MW of utility-scale solar projects. Once completed, these will be the first large-scale solar facilities in West Virginia, and more opportunity exists over the horizon to build solar on former mine lands and other sites.

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want access to clean, affordable energy. In-state wind energy projects – found on ridgetops in counties such as Greenbrier, Grant, Tucker, Mineral and Randolph – generate enough electricity to power 190,000 homes with a combined electric-generating capacity of 742 megawatts (MW). These existing wind farms have already attracted

Given the Mountain State's proud legacy producing the energy that powered our nation's economic rise, it should not be surprising that West Virginia can play a vital role in the 21st century clean energy economy. West Virginia already produces far more energy than it uses in-state and exports electricity into the PJM grid. Adding more



renewable energy in West Virginia will solidify the state's role as an energy exporter without shrinking the pie for West Virginia's traditional energy resources as they innovate with new technology. Taken together, West Virginia could find itself in the enviable position of capturing local solar and wind jobs and investment while helping to fulfill the needs of other states in the region who are looking to meet demand for clean energy products.

There are significant economic reasons to encourage businesses to invest in West Virginia renewable energy over projects built in neighboring states. Solar, wind and energy storage resources frequently become the largest taxpayers in rural communities where they are located, create well-paying jobs in construction, operations and maintenance, and provide local businesses with opportunities to sell into the renewable energy supply chain. Leveraging West Virginia's renewable energy resources also helps to attract manufacturers, tech companies and other private sector employers that want access to renewable energy. These businesses see a

substantial competitive edge from locating in states with ample wind and solar-generated electricity, because renewable energy offers zero emissions energy packaged with low cost and long-term price certainty.

MAREC Action and our member companies that develop solar, wind and storage projects are optimistic about the opportunities in West Virginia. We received a warm welcome at the 2021 West Virginia Chamber of Commerce Business Summit and heard firsthand of the growing interest in renewable energy from state leaders and the business community. It's clear to us that West Virginia's leaders are working hard to attract investment that sets the state up for long-term success. Renewable energy can help West Virginia achieve that prosperous future. We look forward to strengthening local partnerships in the days to come, so that West Virginia remains an attractive place to develop renewable energy projects and that state and local communities receive the benefits of development. 