



Addressing the Social Inequalities in the DC Solar Energy Market  
Gilbert Campbell





**Gilbert Campbell** is the co-founder and CEO of Volt Energy. Volt Energy is a national renewable energy firm that finances and develops solar projects, electric-vehicle charging stations and energy storage solutions for commercial, government, educational and non-profit institutions.

Gilbert's passion is driving inclusion in the clean energy sector by providing STEM education and outreach opportunities for young people across the country. Gilbert has been nationally recognized for his efforts. Gilbert had the distinction of being recognized during President Obama's administration, and in 2016, he received the White House Champions of Change Award for his leadership in advancing climate change equity. Gilbert was named to EBONY magazine's 2014 Power 100 List, which recognizes influential achievements by African Americans annually. Under Gilbert's leadership, Volt is a 2014 recipient of Amtrak and The Washington Wizards Pioneer Award, which honors companies that have made a positive impact in their community. Volt Energy's notable clients include Accenture, The Cheesecake Factory, Subaru, Pepco, District of Columbia Government, and Howard University.

Gilbert serves on the Board of Directors at The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), is an Advisory Board Member at The Center for Energy Research and Technology at North Carolina A&T, and serves on the Board of Directors for the Greater Washington Boys and Girls Club.





# Context – Social Inequality in the DC Solar Energy Market

- Outlook for solar energy has changed in Washington DC for 2020
  - Due to COVID-19, the Washington DC solar industry will install 1.5 megawatts (MW) of capacity in Q2 2020.



↓ **76% less solar capacity installed than pre-COVID forecasts**

The Q2 losses in Washington DC solar deployment due to COVID-19 are equivalent to powering **617 homes** and **\$10.4 million** in economic investment.

- Impact will be felt the most in the minority community
  - Lack of deal flow for minority owned solar Certified Business Enterprises (CBE) companies
  - Job growth opportunities for DC minority residents stalled
  - Solar for All Program impacted by homeowners fears of COVID-19

# Benefit of Addressing Inequality in the DC Solar Energy Market

- Wealth creation opportunities for minority CBEs
- Job growth in underserved communities
- Building a pipeline of future career opportunities in solar for young people of color
- Lower electricity costs for low income DC residents
- Improved health conditions in DC's underserved communities



# Consequences of Not Addressing Inequality in DC Solar Energy Market

- Potential for further gaps in equity and inequality in solar energy for minorities in DC

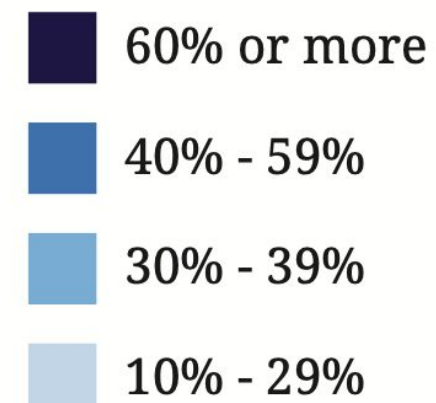
**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the outlook for solar has changed dramatically. Through June of 2020, the Washington DC solar industry will employ 226 workers, rather than the 660 that was originally forecasted.**



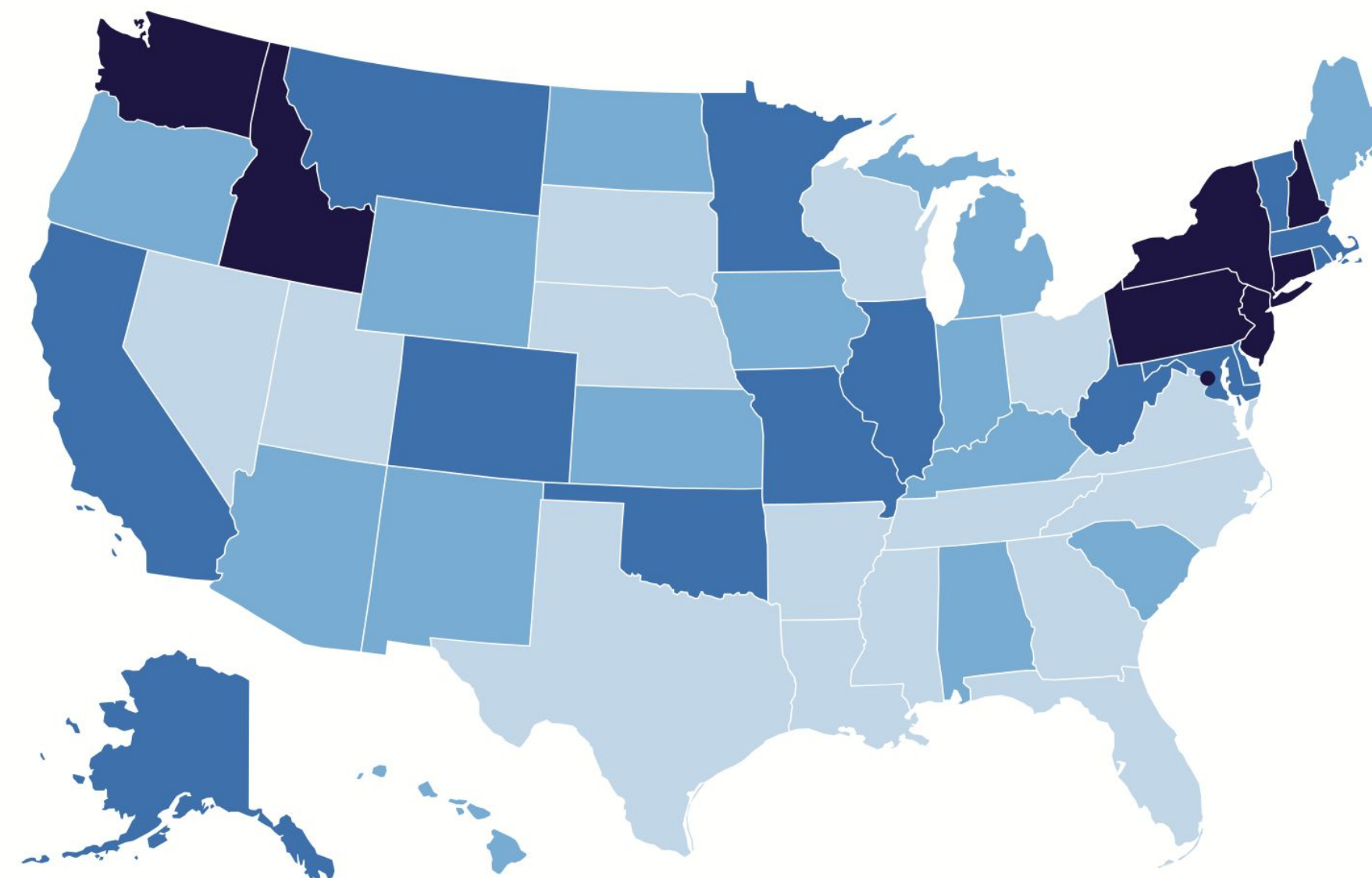
↓ **66% fewer U.S. solar workers than pre-COVID forecasts**

Nationwide, the COVID-19 pandemic has put more than 100,000 solar jobs at risk. These losses would negate 5 years of solar industry growth, pushing the workforce back to a level not seen since 2014.

## COVID-19 Solar Job Losses by State



**36 states will suffer solar job losses in excess of 30%**



*“Regarding IoT, Technology and Innovation, the most critical obstacle for DC to overcome is **the lack of a cross sector coalition to address the social inequalities in the DC solar energy market** that include:*

- greater opportunities for minority owned solar firms
- job opportunities for people of color
- building a future pipeline of young people of color to enter the solar industry
- improving the health disparities in DC’s low income neighborhoods