



No Assault & Batteries www.NABUnited.org
PO Box 87, Wendell MA. 01379
NABWendell@crocker.com

LETTER TO GOVERNOR HEALEY concerning citizen petition on
industrial-scale Battery Energy Storage Systems

September 30, 2024

NAB wrote Governor Healey reminding her of a petition from state residents calling on her to freeze approval of lithium-ion battery storage facilities pending a full independent health and safety review.

The original text of the letter to Governor Maura Healey:

Madame Governor,

A petition (*text copied below*), signed by almost 400 people associated with the citizens' group, No Assault & Batteries in Wendell, MA was hand delivered to your office by our state senator, Jo Comerford, who received it from us on June 10, 2024 at Greenfield Community College.

We have not heard from you about this effort on our part to address the issue of lithium-ion battery fires which is a risk associated with battery energy storage systems such as the one that had been proposed by New Leaf Energy LLC.

Please respond now in light of the intense interest of Massachusetts citizens in siting solar and associated infrastructure in our towns since your supplemental budget inclusion of ways to streamline the approval process for clean energy projects.

Towns need to be able to protect their natural resources, especially forests and wetlands, from the assault of highly dangerous BESS installations, and we hope to hear from you about how a streamlined process which appears to bypass local knowledge in favor of expediting solar installations would protect our environment and our property.

We would like you to speak to your 2023 executive order to create biodiversity goals for the state which makes the preservation of forests imperative. Wendell's forests need protection for the sake of your climate goals as they are capable of sequestering

atmospheric carbon. We bring your attention to the Mass Audubon and Harvard Forest report, “Growing Solar, Protecting Nature” which states, “Our core forests are incredibly valuable for wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and carbon storage, and we must do everything we can to protect them from further fragmentation.”

Governor, your constituents have asked you to “consider stronger safety regulations over these controversial projects,” and to conduct “an independent and thorough investigation of the causes and prevention of battery fires.”

Please let us know if you are willing to pause the permitting on all lithium-ion battery energy storage systems until you have the findings of such an investigation in hand.

Thank you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

The Coordinating Committee of Wendell’s No Assault & Batteries citizen group.

***The petition read:** Citizen Petition to Governor Maura Healey

STOP THE ASSAULT & BATTERIES

TO: GOVERNOR HEALEY

WE, the undersigned residents of Massachusetts, urge you as Governor to order a freeze on the further review, permitting and installation of industrial-scale Battery Energy Storage Systems, including one proposed for a 51-acre forested site in Wendell, pending full investigation of the impacts of such projects on public health, safety and welfare.

Recent fires in energy storage sites in New York and California prompted their Governors to consider stronger safety regulations over these controversial projects. After three separate battery storage fires in summer 2023, NY Governor Hochul created an interagency working group on battery safety to inspect operational projects in the state for safety lapses.

An independent and thorough investigation of the causes and prevention of battery fires must take place before any of these energy storage systems are installed in Massachusetts.