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Microgrids Powered by Renewable Energy Will Generate Half a Million Jobs and \$72 Billion in GDP Growth By 2030

New report conducted by Guidehouse Insights and commissioned by Civil Society Institute, Millennial Action Project and RMI shows lasting impact on local economies and job growth from investing in renewable energy, battery storage and controls for microgrids.

Washington, USA—November 17— A new Guidehouse Insights report, *The Renewable Energy Economic Benefits of Microgrids*, reveals the forecasted growth and economic benefits of microgrids to create a compelling case for why policymakers, businesses, and renewable energy advocates should collaborate, invest in and scale up implementation of microgrids. The report takes a high-level forecast of microgrids growth within the United States, and features California and Puerto Rico as case studies. Both areas have experienced power disruptions caused by natural disasters attributed to climate change, inducing long-term impacts on local economies.

Microgrids are not only a solution for climate resilience, but also for economic resilience. According to Guidehouse, every \$1 million invested in renewable energy microgrid assets will create 3.4 skilled jobs and \$500,000 in economic benefits. Further, both Puerto Rico and California have mandates of 100% renewable energy by 2050. Through exploring the less researched space of the impacts that microgrids have on economies, this report showcases microgrids as the best viable pathway to meeting state-level climate goals.

Among the key findings for California:

- Investment in renewable microgrid assets in California is forecast to create over 166,000 jobs by 2030, generating over \$22 billion in GDP.
- In 2021, microgrids have created 4,670 jobs and contributed \$850 million in GDP and \$1.76 billion in business sales.
- Over the next 10 years, California's renewable asset microgrid capacity is expected to grow 14.5x, bringing the total to 10,500 megawatts by 2030.

Among the key findings for Puerto Rico:

- Investment in renewable microgrid assets in Puerto Rico is forecast to create over 9,000 jobs by 2030, generating over \$1.2 billion in GDP. *Those numbers increase if approved, distributed solar PV and battery deployments are integrated into microgrids.*
- As of 2021, microgrids have created 163 jobs and contributed \$26.94 million in GDP and \$53.2 million in business sales.
- Overall installed capacity will grow three times its current size.

“A microgrid-driven Resiliency Revolution is at hand. Microgrids will help increase the resiliency of the electric grid by helping communities become more prepared to prevent power outages due to extreme weather and other

natural disasters and recover quicker. But as this report shows, enhancing our resiliency through microgrids will also boost our economy and add jobs,” said Roy Torbert, senior principal of RMI. “This report gives further proof that solutions exist and are within our reach.”

The release of the Guidehouse economic impact report coincides with [new survey results](#) showing that the public is ready to embrace the shift toward microgrids. Familiarity and support for microgrids has doubled over the past year. A survey of 1,100 adults conducted October 2021 by a bipartisan team of pollsters—Lake Research Partners and Breglio and Associates—found that today 26% of adults are familiar with microgrids, up from 13% of 2020 voters. Similarly, knowledge of microgrids leads to support. After learning more about microgrids, 79% of adults favor increasing the use of microgrids, up from 67% of 2020 voters. The top reasons for supporting microgrids include affordability (76%), resiliency (76%), jobs (75%), and community concerns (73%).

“These reports clearly demonstrate that microgrids that use renewable energy can be a powerful engine for change, not only for our environment and resiliency, but also for our economy. The public is ready, and support is growing,” said Pam Solo, president of the Civil Society Institute. “People understand that microgrids are key to resiliency, national security, savings, equity and reducing harmful climate changing emissions.

Microgrids are an increasingly vital part of the urgent need to modernize our electric grid and meet the demands of communities, businesses, and government institutions for clean, resilient and efficient energy.

“For young Americans, fewer issues are more pressing than addressing energy supply and resiliency for a more sustainable future. Our grandparents’ electric grid desperately needs modernization. Microgrids have emerged as a key intervention for forward-looking lawmakers to act on now,” said Layla Zaidane, President and CEO of the Millennial Action Project. “The information in this report will equip our network of young legislators with the knowledge they need, especially around jobs and economic growth, to build coalitions and invest in the future using today’s technologies and innovations. We can address our energy needs and address the challenges of climate change while building the economy.”

The full report, including an executive summary, is available for download [here](#). Both reports will be presented in a news conference [viewable here](#). Think Microgrid, a microgrid advocacy group, will participate in the news conference to unveil their vision statement and kick off an educational campaign to help policymakers understand how microgrids provide unique solutions for pressing climate challenges.

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The Millennial Action Project (MAP) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to activating a new generation of political leaders. MAP does so by identifying innovative policy options to address long-standing challenges, and by working to build post-partisan coalitions of young legislators committed to prioritizing better outcomes for their constituents and communities.

The Civil Society Institute (CSI) is a non-profit, non-partisan research and education organization focusing on advancing civic engagement on issues that directly affect individuals and their communities. For the past decade, CSI has focused on public opinion research on energy policy and the environment and Solution Voters, those voters who insist on pragmatic and timely solutions, especially on issues related to clean water, air and climate change.

RMI is an independent nonprofit founded in 1982 that transforms global energy systems through market-driven solutions to align with a 1.5°C future and secure a clean, prosperous, zero-carbon future for all. We work in the world’s most critical geographies and engage businesses, policymakers, communities, and NGOs to identify and scale energy system interventions that will cut greenhouse gas emissions at least 50 percent by 2030. RMI has offices in Basalt and Boulder, Colorado; New York City; Oakland, California; Washington, D.C.; and Beijing. More information on RMI can be found at rmi.org or follow us on Twitter @RockyMtnInst.