

Renewable Energy Bans & Long-Term Moratoria

OUR POSITION

Farmers and ranchers should not lose their ability to host renewable energy projects because of blanket bans or open-ended moratoria. Local governments may need short, clearly defined pauses to update rules, but long-term restrictions that function as de facto bans undermine landowner autonomy and limit economic opportunities in rural communities.

WHY IT MATTERS

Renewable energy projects are a dependable, long-term revenue option available to family farms. Nationally, landowners receive [approximately \\$1.8 billion per year in lease payments](#) from wind and solar projects. When government (federal, state or local) adopts bans or prolonged moratoria, they remove a voluntary tool that helps farmers stabilize income, reduce debt, and preserve farmland for future generations.

Short-term pauses can be reasonable when a jurisdiction needs time to clarify zoning rules or update siting standards. But open-ended moratoria often become long-term barriers that block landowners from making choices about their own property. Research shows renewable projects typically use a very small share of farmland—[less than 0.1% of all U.S. agricultural land](#). Restricting farmer participation imposes large local costs for limited public benefit.

WHAT WE SUPPORT

REFA supports the right of farmers and ranchers to evaluate renewable energy opportunities without being restricted by long-term bans or de facto prohibitions. Landowners are best positioned to understand the economic and agronomic realities of their own operations. Renewable energy income can help small and medium-sized farms stay in family ownership. Long-term moratoria prevent them from pursuing a legitimate agricultural commodity that may strengthen their business.

REFA supports narrowly tailored, time-limited pauses only when jurisdictions need to update local rules—and only when those pauses have defined timelines and clear objectives. Jurisdictions should communicate transparently and ensure rules are fair, consistent, and measurable.

REFA supports local regulations based on objective, measurable standards. Reasonable setbacks, construction rules, road-use protections, and decommissioning requirements can help communities manage projects responsibly.

About REFA

The [Renewable Energy Farmers of America](#) is a 501(c)(6) membership trade association that empowers farmer and rancher landowners with expert guidance, education, peer-to-peer networking and advocacy for renewable energy decisions while protecting property rights.