

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND PUBLIC POLICY: BARRIERS IN WORKING TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION

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The importance of energy to society and the functioning of stable energy systems are uncontroversial. Given the current population and energy usage trends, there appears to be a need for alternative forms of energy to not only meet the demands, but to reduce impacts to the environment that result from increased greenhouse gas emissions as a result of fossil fuel usage. Renewable energy can provide the answer for this issue, as the multiple forms and sources have the potential to provide stable, reliable energy that will not cause an increase in the greenhouse effect. However, there are barriers to the implementation of renewable energy that can be categorized in social, economic, technological, and policy related issues. To conduct research on this topic, I examined relevant literature that discusses renewable energy and factors that have caused issues in its progression over the past few years. I was able to see some modern-day implications of these barriers through creating a brief on Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) for the King County Executive's Office. Through research on the foundation and implementation of PACE and interviews with officials in states that currently utilize PACE, I was able to see some of the barriers encountered in my research in action. By examining both of these pieces, obstacles to renewable energy implementation will be observed and understood, and potential remedies explored, which will have important consequences in long-term energy solutions.