Einson lends support to renewable energy initiative

By Jim Sullivan Staff Writer
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AMESBURY — District 3 City Councilor Matt Einson has joined more than 70 Massachusetts elected officials calling for a 50 percent renewable energy supply in the state by 2030.

The sole official from Essex County to do so, Einson joined Cambridge Mayor E. Denise Simmons, seven Newton city councilors, a pair of Watertown town councilors and 38 members of Brookline Town Meeting, among others, in signing a Massachusetts Climate Action Network letter.

The letter asks lawmakers to support an increase in the state’s renewable portfolio standard by 3 percent a year to achieve a 50 percent renewable energy supply by 2030.

Also known as a renewable electricity standard, a renewable portfolio standard is the mandated percentage of clean energy privately held utility companies such as National Grid must sell back to their customers.

At the moment, the state’s renewable portfolio standard increases by 1 percent a year. The letter says increasing the rate by 3 percent each year “will allow the state to fully realize the benefits of new clean energy demand and lower wholesale electricity prices.”

The letter – which Massachusetts Climate Action Network Executive Director Carol Oldham presented to the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy during a hearing Tuesday at the Statehouse – also calls for an increase in the renewable energy supply of 100 percent by 2050.
“It’s a slow ramp up, which makes it very reasonable,” Oldham said. “We have made this commitment as a state in various laws and there are plenty of cities and towns that intend to be 100 percent by 2050.

Approached by a constituent on the matter, Einson said he read the letter and reached out to the Massachusetts Climate Action Network before signing on.

“This makes a lot of sense to me and I thought it was worth signing my name,” Einson said. “The increase from 1 to 3 percent is in line with trying to meet those goals.”

Einson, a city councilor since 2015, is running unopposed for re-election this fall and said he is pleased with the direction the city is headed when it comes to renewable energy.

“We have the solar farms coming on line and we seem to be moving in a pretty good direction as far as that goes,” Einson said.

Oldham added that the Massachusetts Climate Action Network, a nonprofit organization, has plenty of activists working to raise awareness in local communities and is happy to have Einson’s support.

“The more people who know about this, the more people will support it,” Oldham said. “It is a great policy and it is something people want. All of the studies, all of the polling and focus groups show that Massachusetts loves clean energy. It provides a ton of jobs in our state and I think local elected officials get excited about it once they learn what it is.”