



Oregon Senate
Environment and Natural Resources Committee

HB 2893A Public Comments
May 6, 2013

Dear Chair Dingfelder and members of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association (OSEIA) is a non-profit trade group established in 1981 that represents a diverse constituency from small, solar installers with less than four employees to global manufacturers of panels and equipment, such as SolarWorld in Hillsboro and Advanced Energy in Bend.

OSEIA requests your support for HB 2893A which extends the current solar pilot program (aka the “feed-in tariff”) by one year and increases the renewable energy capacity allowed under the program by 10%, or 2.5 megawatts (MW) for small and mid-sized commercial PV systems. This is as much a job retention and creation bill as it is a renewable energy bill.

By way of background, the Oregon Legislature established the solar pilot program in 2009 as an alternative incentive for solar energy production. The concept was simple. Establish a guaranteed price that utilities will pay for renewable energy production without reliance on state tax credits or other incentives. This type of program has been adopted by over three-fourths of the world as the most effective and efficient means to promote local, renewable energy development from small, residential rooftop PV to larger scale, commercial PV systems.

In just the first two years, the pilot program was responsible for over 5MW of installed capacity, or nearly 50% of the newly installed solar capacity within PGE and Pacificorp’s service territories. That’s enough energy to power 1000 homes in Oregon, and without the program, good paying jobs would’ve been lost in an already lackluster economy.

OSEIA has enjoyed the collaboration of a broad coalition of stakeholders including Sierra Club, Environment Oregon, Oregonians for Renewable Energy Policy, Solar Oregon, and Lisa Naito in support of the pilot program, and although our goal was to improve and significantly expand the pilot, we had only enough time to achieve a compromise with the investor-owned utilities and Citizens Utility Board.

HB 2893A is a bridge that ensures the continuation of a very successful program, and equally important, it will retain and create jobs among commercial sector installers who have access to little or no incentives. HB 2893A promotes solar energy - a free source of fuel with no carbon emissions – to help Oregonians achieve greater energy independence, enhance the resilience of the electrical grid, and support a stronger innovation economy in this great state. Please vote yes on HB 2893A!

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn Montgomery", written in a cursive style.

Glenn Montgomery, Executive Director, OSEIA