

Shayne Kimball
Solar Surfers, LLC
Meeting Date: 3-3-15
HB 2745

Testimony

Hello,

My name is Shayne Kimball and I'm a solar contractor in Wallowa and Malheur County, from Eastern Oregon. I've been installing solar PV systems for approximately 5 years now, and previous to that, I was a science teacher in Adrian Oregon. My business is called Solar Surfers, LLC, because we feel we are riding the wave of the future! I started in Nyssa Oregon, and right when Idaho Power first started to offer the 1st feed-in-tariff program; which was 55 cents per kWh by the way.

Thanks entirely to this program, I've been able to make a great living, and over time I've been able to reduce my cost of installing ground mounts from \$6/watt to \$4.50/watt. I've employed dozens of people in the last 5 years and all of them have been dedicated to the growth of this new and exciting industry and want to stay in game. In connection, this has been the most rewarding job I've ever had. I really feel like I have a chance at the American Dream! Plus, you can't help but feel good about helping people in your local community become more energy independent. Our clients are smart, progressive, and financially educated folks who know that the feed-in-tariff will allow them to Cash Flow their investment while being good stewards of the land. Most of them are farmers and ranchers. However, without the program it just doesn't pencil out for 90% of my clients.

It's true, 90% of my business has been from the feed-in-tariff program. However, Idaho Power offered the last feed-in-tariff round last year, and are gladly done with it. As a matter, of fact Idaho Power is currently trying to convince the Idaho PUC that all PURPA contracts should be only 2 years instead of 20. Which spells death to anybody trying to put in a solar farm in Idaho, and maybe even in Oregon. What this comes down to is that I just lost 90% of my business in Malheur County. However, I saw this coming and started doing projects in Wallowa County, part of Pacific Power's territory last year to try to take advantage of the left overs that Pacific Power was offering. So, far so good, but they're only left overs from last years round and it's at 23 cents per kWh. However, does it still work at 23 cents? Yes, barely, but if you pull the plug, we're done Solar Surfers will sink.

The feed-in-tariff allows people to cash flow their investment, but with out it they can't. People need a reasonable return on their investment to make solar work for them. Please pass HB 2745.