

From: Bob Skinner
To: [LRO](#)
Subject: RETC's Extension - Key to Future Solar Installations at Hire Electric, Inc.
Date: Friday, June 02, 2017 10:32:56 AM

Dear Joint Tax Credit Committee Members,

Thank you for considering the importance of the RETC extension to our business and employees.

In 2009 with an eye towards the future, Hire Electric, Inc. of The Dalles opened it's solar division. Business was slow at first as solar installed cost were \$9/watt, paybacks were long and return on investment poor. Only true-believing customers moved forward even with the RETC and Energy Trust of Oregon (ETO) incentives for solar. We survived by faith in the future of solar in Oregon and a tight belt.

Over the years as solar prices declined and as business picked up we were able to employ more skilled workers and the future looked bright. With residential installed solar cost currently at \$2.50 to \$3.00 per watt, our customers with a good site in sunny eastern Oregon and with the RETC and ETO incentives are seeing an average of a 5 year payback and non Pacific Power/ETO customers an approximate 12 year payback. A large percentage of Eastern Oregon are not Pacific Power customers and not eligible for the ETO incentives. All they have is the Federal Tax Credit and Oregon's RETC to make solar financially feasible.

Lets fast forward to 2018 without RETC. Our solar sales and installations will have dramatically slowed. (see graphic cliff) Our sunny eastern Oregon Pacific Power/ETO customers will see an average of 10 to 12 year solar payback which is marginal at best. (perhaps longer with declining ETO incentives). Our non ETO customers will see a 14 to 16+ year payback making solar no longer financially feasible for them.

Long term even without the RETC solar prices will continue to decline, utility rates will rise and solar sales will pick back up. Many of us will not survive till then however and those of us who do survive will have had to let go valuable trained employees. Later, it will difficult to reacquire these employees who will have gone to other states and industries for employment.

Our adolescent solar industry will be able to survive and prosper without the RETC in 3 to 5 years after it matures. While it matures, we will still need your support! Please vote for the extension of the RETC.

Respectfully,
Bob Skinner

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