

## Testimony on Raised Bill # 5225 AN ACT CONCERNING SOLAR WORK

Paul Bartoo  
PV Squared  
185 Main Street  
New Britain CT 06051  
860-827-8599

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Chairman Colapietro, Chairman Shapiro, Committee members, my name is Paul Bartoo, and I am an account manager at PV Squared, an electrical contracting business specializing in solar energy installations, based in New Britain Connecticut. For the past five years, I have been part of the leadership team growing this small business, and promoting the growth of the photovoltaic industry in Connecticut. Others in my company have been active in the photovoltaic solar energy field for the past 10 years, or longer, including our General Manager, William Stillinger, a professional engineer who has been promoting renewable energy resources in the Northeast for over 30 years.

I wish to voice my opposition to RHB 5225, An Act Concerning Solar Work. As I see it, this bill is a "green jobs killer" that would negatively impact Connecticut residents who seek to install affordable, reliable solar energy systems on their homes, and which would put hundreds of Connecticut jobs at risk.

RHB 5225 is a flawed bill. It seeks to correct problems that do not exist.

The first "non-problem" is in regard to safety. In fact, the licensure and work practices currently in place for the photovoltaic industry in Connecticut are working, and additional regulation would be burdensome and would only serve to increase the cost of solar projects to the homeowner.

Solar electric projects are currently being safely installed throughout Connecticut under the supervision of licensed professionals under the existing rules. Section 3 of RHB 5225 seeks to displace the many employees and subcontractors working for companies such as mine, who have been trained to hoist, place and anchor solar modules as part of a properly and safely managed installation.

The second "non-problem" is in regard to authorization to do solar electric work. Currently, the state allows solar electric work to be conducted by E-1 and E2 electricians, and by PV-1 and PV-2 "limited electric license" professionals. The PV-1 and PV-2 license was specifically created in 2005 by this Legislature in order to have an appropriate license for individuals who wished to specialize in solar installations.

The statement of purpose accompanying RHB 5225 says the proposal has been written to authorize E-1 and E-2 electricians to perform solar electric installations, and Section 2 appears to do just that. This is very strange, because in fact E-1 and E-2 electricians are currently authorized to conduct such work, according to Richard Hurlburt of the CT Department of Consumer Protection.

Unfortunately, the way that RHB 5225 is written, it appears that it would disenfranchise the current holders of the PV-1 and PV-2 license. I am convinced that my company would not survive, should this occur. Aside from the sheer disruption that would result, both the loss of talent and the increase in cost that would follow would be devastating. I believe this would be

true not only to my company but to the photovoltaic industry in Connecticut as a whole, which is already hurting due to our nation's economic downturn, and more locally, due to reductions in the incentives offered by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund for solar installations in the state.

As many of you know, the solar installers in Connecticut have worked diligently to create a strong and thriving industry in the state. With the support of the state's Connecticut Clean Energy Fund, we have an industry association, Solar Connecticut.

Today, however, I see this industry threatened. I ask that you join me in opposing changes that would radically disrupt what we in this industry have taken so long to build.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this proposal, and for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.