

Written Testimony of Greg Teschendorf
Former Solar Installer for Alteris Renewables, INC.
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Energy & Technology Committee
March 15, 2011

Written Testimony for: **Senate Bill 1** *An Act Concerning Connecticut's Energy Future*

Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, and Members of the Committee, thank you for considering my testimony.

In 2008 I was hired by a Connecticut company to install solar panels. I learned the trade from the very bottom rung of the ladder. I installed small solar electric systems on residential roofs. I sat for my OSHA exams to be qualified to work on roofs and to operate arial lifts. Eventually I had the opportunity to work on larger commercial solar installations for Connecticut businesses and schools. However, I was soon asked to go to work in Massachusetts to install commercial systems there. Reason being that the solar market was so much better in Massachusetts, it was worth it to the company to put me up in a hotel to complete the work.

When I was called back to Connecticut, there were only residential jobs to install. My performance had been very good, so they promoted me to "lead installer" responsible for the entire residential installation. I developed aspirations to become a Solar Project Manager, or even a Solar Sales Professional, as I was now quite knowledgeable of the complete installation process, and I saw that not only are solar energy systems the right choice for a safe, clean energy future, they are also a sound financial investment worth sharing with businesses, homeowners, and municipalities.

But then incentives dried up, last year's bill was vetoed, and I was laid off.

I am happy to tell you I was unemployed for only three months before finding another job with a different Connecticut solar integration company. The only problem is that all of our work is in New Jersey! Starting March 21st, I will be living in a hotel room again, building value into the New Jersey economy, for the health of New Jersey's energy infrastructure, and paying New Jersey income tax. The owner of the new company I will soon start work with reassured me that when and if the solar jobs come back to Connecticut I will work here again. But for at least the next four months I will have the opportunity to work on the biggest project I will have seen to date, a 1.7 MW system in New Jersey.

I am here today to tell you that I am a proud UConn Graduate, my family and friends are in Connecticut. Connecticut is my home and I feel that I should be able to work where I live. Connecticut must adopt solar energy policy similar to the fantastic programs that are so successful in New Jersey and Massachusetts, to bring our jobs back and reap the rewards of this "no-brainer" investment. The 2009 *KEMA Report* demonstrates that the State of New York receives between \$3-4 in financial gains to the economy for every \$1 invested in Renewable Energy. Germany has four times as much installed solar as the entire United States of America, and yet more sunshine falls annually on Connecticut than on Germany. We must create a competitive, market-based, sustainably-funded Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SREC) Program, which has already worked in other states to drive down the cost of solar through competition. Please bring my job back to my state. Thank you.

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