



TESTIMONY FROM MICHAEL TRAHAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SOLAR CONNECTICUT, INC., IN SUPPORT OF SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22 PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION LIMITING THE USE OF MONEYS CONTAINED IN THE CLEAN ENERGY FUND.

March 5, 2014

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Solar Connecticut is the largest business and education association of state-based businesses working to support policies that encourage awareness of solar power and promote a sustainable solar energy workforce.

Public Act 11-80 sent a clear signal to the clean energy business community that Connecticut policy makers support the development, use and job creation benefits of renewable energy. As a result, 65-members of Solar Connecticut made financial investments here. They secured additional office space, added workers, promoted their businesses and moved assets here all with the understanding that the state is serious about growing a clean energy economy free of boom/bust cycles.

The 2013 CGA raid on the Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority (CEFIA) gave clean energy business leaders reason to question the state's commitment to 11-80. Because the solar industry remains dependent on state support, any inclination that the state is backing away from its commitment causes an immediate ripple effect in our business community. Every aspect of a solar business is subsequently rethought. New hires on put on hold. Marketing and sales operations are suspended. And businesses begin to look to other states where state support is uninterrupted.

Certainly, the 2013 decision to raid CEFIA did not originate in the Energy committee. Committee leaders and numerous members went public with their opposition to that raid and went about repairing this disruptive action for which solar businesses are thankful. We're thankful too that the effort to squash future attempts to raid CEFIA has started in the Energy committee. The committee's approval of SJ Resolution No. 22, or similar action that allows CEFIA to fulfill its legislative mandate would begin the process of solidifying the state's commitment.

Solar businesses in Connecticut are fortunate to be working in a state where the clean energy activities are designed by the most creative most innovative collection of state government clean energy finance professionals anywhere in the U.S. We're proud to be associated with CEFIA and see ourselves as a key driver in Connecticut's clean energy pursuits. So we're obviously supportive of SJ Resolution No. 22 or any legislative action that rightfully allows CEFIA to operate unimpeded, and permits the individuals who work there to perform their duties without annual threat of job suspension.