

**Connecticut General Assembly**

**Thursday, February 19, 2015**

**Testimony of Daniel Rys**

**To the Energy and Technology Committee**

**Testimony in opposition of Raised Bill No. 730 - AN ACT PROHIBITING HOMEOWNER  
OR CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATIONS FROM INTERFERING WITH OR PREVENTING  
INSTALLATION OF SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS**

My name is Daniel Rys. I am a Commercial loan officer and Vice President of Windsor Federal Savings and Loan. My experience in this area is as follows:

- As a commercial lender I have worked with several businesses and community associations concerning the installation of solar panels.
- I serve on a Town Commission that is considering a "solar farm" on Town owned land.
- I have done several hours of research for the installation of solar panels on my own home.

I am not opposed to the installation of solar panels, however this bill as written undermines the democratic process in community associations and is not necessary.

The fact is in most community associations the roofs and land that solar panels are attached to are not owned by an individual owner but are owned, in part, by all the owners in that community. Approving this bill as written is like allowing your neighbor to use your electricity or water. Permission must be obtained by all owners before such a project is allowed. All associations have a process whereby a unit owner may propose a personal improvement to their unit.

Many associations are now considering solar panels on roofs or land to offset the cost of common electric bills. Some high rise communities are using existing cell towers to add solar panels. In all cases, they should require all unit owners to have a say in the completion of these projects. When our town decided on their solar farm, we know a referendum will be needed for approval. If individual home owners who are not part of a community association want to pursue this it may be beneficial for them, but not necessarily for the community as a whole.

The other issue with allowing individual solar panels on roofs is that once the panels are installed the roof warrantee is voided. This will affect all the unit owners' ability to mitigate the cost of future roof repairs and cause the roof to fail sooner than originally warranted.

Other issues to consider with the installation of solar panels are the fact that many of the companies now installing these panels are new. Like any new business their warrantee is only as good for as long as they are in business. Unfortunately, there is little history in this area and many customers may find that warrantees on equipment and the availability to obtain equipment may be too costly to maintain.

Solar panel companies are not allowed to use more panels than the current usage requires. There is no way for solar panels to generate revenue. Their purposed is only to reduce the amount of energy used.

Customers end up paying slightly less for electricity until the utility company increases their standard fee. If something needs to be legislated this is where the attention should be.

Thank you for your time and consideration.