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March 15, 2015

To: The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy

Governor of Connecticut

State Capitol

210 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

Cc: Joint Energy & Technology Committee Chairs

Senator Paul Doyle and Representative Lonnie Reed

Gentlemen:

We are expressing our strong support for Raised Bill 928, An Act Concerning Shared Clean Energy Facilities in this presentation.

Clean Feet Investors I, LLC is a Connecticut based private investment fund that provides capital for renewable energy projects. To date, we have invested in solar P. V., solar thermal and battery storage projects in six states and the District of Columbia. Ironically, we have not made any investment in a CT project because, quite frankly, the potential economic returns in other states are better than in CT. Larger solar P. V. systems, such as those anticipated in the shared renewable energy program, could change this equation.

The principal Managers of Clean Feet Investors are Bernard Zahren and Jigar Shah. Both of us have extensive experience in the successful development, finance and operations of renewable energy projects. Mr. Zahren was the CEO of a landfill gas development company from the late 1980's until the sale of the company in 2001. Mr. Zahren also serves as the Chairman of the Avon Clean Energy Commission. Mr. Shah was the co-founder of Sun Edison, which is now one of the largest owner/operators of solar P. V. and wind powered renewable energy in the world ([www.sunedison.com](http://www.sunedison.com)).

The bedrock of the U. S. economy is the culture of free enterprise, open competition and availability of private capital for entrepreneurs to start a business, create new jobs and enhance the economy of the community in which they live and operate. We strongly believe that private development of shared solar facilities are a prototype example of this paradigm. If properly structured, Connecticut could benefit from new jobs, large capital investment, community shared benefits and an improved electric grid architecture as a result of this legislation. Others will testify as to some of these aspects, but we are limiting our statements to only one specific attribute of this legislation: the relevance and urgency of adopting this program immediately, in the current session of the legislature. This is imperative to attract private capital to our state in 2015.

Here are a number of important points:

A. The 30% Federal Tax Credits for renewable energy projects will expire (for projects not grandfathered) by 12/31/16 - less than 2 years from now. The Tax Credit will drop to only 10% in 2017 and beyond. This single incentive can be the swing factor in a decision to build or not build a solar P. V. project with private capital.

B. The ZREC bid prices for Connecticut Class One renewable projects have been falling in each year of the bid allocation process and are expected to continue to decline as the providers of power secure more of their required percentages of renewable energy under the RPS.

C. The grid infrastructure is at risk from increased disruption from severe weather events, greatly influenced by global climate change. (See companion discussion.) Distributed generation, especially with backup storage capabilities, is essential to allow local portions of the grid to operate independently of the system-wide transmission and distribution system (i.e. the entire NEPOOL ISO grid).

With the above points so paramount, we urge you to support the swift passage of Raised Bill SB 928.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Bernard Zahren and Jigar Shah in blue ink. Bernard Zahren's signature is on the left and Jigar Shah's is on the right.

Bernard Zahren

Jigar Shah

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

1. Consider a tie between the Energy Efficiency Fund (run by the IOU's) and the Subscribers. Give them an incentive to not only have a home energy audit performed but actually have a reputable contractor perform the retrofits that will conserve more energy. Monitor/measure this process more carefully. Ratepayer money funds this program and, to date, the net results achieved are dubious, at best.
2. Give all CT communities who sign up for the Clean Communities (or similar initiatives to fight global climate change) special credit toward future awards/grants, etc. for strongly supporting Shared Clean Energy Facilities in their community. Issues such as expedited site approvals and building permits, etc. Also encourage municipal ratepayers to become Subscribers to a Shared Clean Energy Facility as part of an overall energy conservation and use plan formally adopted by that town or municipal district.
3. Encourage any Shared Clean Energy Facility developer to look beyond the short term construction of just a solar P. V. array. Provide for a utility interconnection that is larger than needed for just solar P. V. so that future additions such as battery storage, electric vehicle charging stations, and even micro grid additions (such as natural gas fired cogeneration facilities) could be accommodated. The future of our electric grid is changing. Distributed Energy Resources (DER) are an essential part of the energy model for the future. States like NY and CA already recognize that future - CT should not be left behind.

## SOLARIZE AVON

The debate is over. The unbiased scientific evidence is irrefutable. The jury of international judgment has reached a unanimous verdict:

*The burning of fossil fuels by the human race is causing irreparable damage  
to the climate of Mother Earth – and, at an alarming rate.*

A large number of stakeholders seek to cast doubt on this imperative. But it is increasingly obvious that they do so at the risk of destroying the environment that enables the 7 billion inhabitants of our planet to enjoy the benefits that conventional sources of energy have provided for the past 150 years. Indeed, a continuation of “business as usual” could threaten the very existence of the human species in the next few centuries.

Is this the legacy we really want to leave for our children, grandchildren, and beyond?

