



1 March 2018

Energy and Technology Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3900  
Hartford, CT 06106

Senate Bill 9  
An Act Concerning Connecticut's Energy Future

Co-Chairs Reed, Winfield, Formica and Ranking Member Ackert:

My name is Sam Schneider, and I am Co- Founder of Earthlight Technologies.

Earthlight Technologies is a family-owned and operated business based in Ellington, CT. Our team is comprised of over 60 employees and we specialize in solutions for residential and commercial solar, as well as commercial energy efficiency. We have grown, in large part, due to the policies and programs put into place by this committee over the years.

I appreciate the opportunity to share Earthlight's concerns with Senate Bill 9, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Energy Future. As currently drafted, this bill would put foundational solar policies such as net metering at risk, and create new solar programs that would stifle private investment and innovation in the clean energy sector and create real uncertainty in energy efficiency. There has been consistency in solar planning, through the ZREC and SHREC programs and the conservation and load management programs funded through the Energy Efficiency fund and administered by the Energy Efficiency Board and the electric distribution companies.

While we appreciate that the authors of Senate Bill 9 and the Comprehensive Energy Strategy are trying to find appropriate successor programs for distributed generation, Senate Bill 9 would have a profound negative impact on Earthlight and place the state's 2,710 solar workers' livelihoods at risk. We ask that the legislature bring certainty and consistency back into the market place. We are not opposed to a tariff based program but the tariff needs to be appropriately designed and can be modeled after programs similar to the SMART Program implemented in Massachusetts. The existing ZREC program should be extended until the tariff is approved by the Public Utility Regulatory Authority.

Senate Bill 9 is sending signal that it does not want to encourage the growth or retention of solar jobs, nor help provide greater energy choices for its residents and businesses suffering from high energy costs. If SB9 were to become law, it would discourage Earthlight and other solar companies from doing business in Connecticut.



On the energy efficiency side, Earthlight is very concerned about the uncertainty of how this new RFP concept will be put into place, how it will be administered and how small contractors such as Earthlight will fit into the new scheme.

We started as primarily an Energy Efficiency Contractor. It still comprises over 30% of our business. The problem in the uncertainty of the energy efficiency market in Connecticut is not due to program design - it is due solely to the legislative sweep in the budget and we are not sure how this new concept would alleviate or correct those problems.

We are very concerned about the effects that Senate Bill 9 would have on Earthlight Technologies and our employees. We are happy to work with the Committee to improve this bill or design programs in response to specific needs but we respectfully respect that the Committee move with caution and in a way that can allow companies such as ours to continue to grow and thrive here in Connecticut.

Thank you for your attention.