

Antonia Hover

From: Office of Commissioner Fay
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 8:53 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Solar Together

Please place this email in Docket No. 20190061-EI

Thanks

Veronica D. Washington

Executive Assistant to Commissioner Andrew Fay
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850)413-6036
vwashing@psc.state.fl.us

From: Sean Shaw [<mailto:sean@seanshaw.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2020 12:32 AM
To: Office of Commissioner Fay
Subject: Solar Together

Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850
1-800-342-3552

Dear Commissioner Andrew Giles Fay

On Tuesday, you will vote on whether to approve Solar Together, a proposal that would add 20 solar-power plants over two years and significantly decrease our state's carbon footprint. As you well know, this project will have long-term ramifications for our state's mix of energy sources. The Solar Together program should be a model for all the state's utilities, including those that are owned by investors, municipalities and cooperatives. Florida should embrace any effort to diversify our sources of energy production, particularly those that are sustainable and renewable.

Addressing climate change and the threat that it poses to our state isn't just a political issue, it's a moral imperative. This is our moment to actually make a difference. For decades, community organizers have led the effort to bring solar energy to the sunshine state. Their hard work has culminated in the development of the largest community solar program in the United States, with 1,490 new megawatts of solar power - enough to power almost 300,000 homes. This major push is also estimated to save customers \$249 million. The groundswell of support for renewable energy solutions is undeniable. Over 90,000 people have already signed up to participate. The program is endorsed by community groups across the state like Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Vote Solar, Sustainable Florida, Broward, Brevard and Miami-Dade counties.

The conversation about how to best move forward, and the solutions to be considered, should include diverse viewpoints and experiences. We all play a role in utilizing fuel resources to sustain our everyday lives. Yet, renewable energy accessibility is limited to those who can afford it; despite the disparaging impacts of coal and gas fuel use, like public health, on these communities. The Solar Together proposal reserves a block specifically for low income customers and gives them a fixed rate, guaranteeing that they will lower their electric bills. By making this program affordable for all, we can move the needle and bring accessible solar participation to our state.

Florida's environmental vulnerabilities pose a unique threat to our way of life. Increasing access to, and use of clean renewable energy is key to tackling climate change and sea level rise. We cannot continue to debate what we all know to be a fact, climate change is real and it is not going away anytime soon. Our response will dictate what kind of state we leave to the next generation. The choice is ours. The need for access to renewable energy is imperative. Supporting this type of program is a no-brainer.

As the Democratic nominee for attorney general, one of the foundations of my campaign was addressing the devastating effects of climate change on our great state. As a private citizen, I have continued that fight. Florida is worth saving. Our country and our planet is worth saving. I hope that you will reconsider your decision to recommend the denial of this vital project. While I understand the philosophical differences of opinions on renewable energy, it shouldn't be the deterring factor to introducing this program in our state.

Ps. Here is a link to the Op-ed that I authored in the Tampa Bay Times.
(<https://www.tampabay.com/opinion/2020/02/27/solar-together-is-a-model-for-all-the-states-utilities-column/>)

Sean Shaw
Founder, People Over Profits
Former Democratic Nominee for Attorney General
Former Member, Florida House of Representatives

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Sean M. Shaw

e: sean@seanshaw.com

t: @sshawfl

f: <https://www.facebook.com/sshawfl/>

www.seanshaw.com