

From: [Doug Coward](#)
To: [Lee Eng Tan](#)
Subject: Request for Comments on Development of Solar Technologies Dated April 23, 2015
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 11:58:45 AM

June 24, 2015

Via Electronic Mail: LTan@psc.state.fl.us

Ms. Lee Eng Tan
Office of the General Counsel
Florida Public Service Commission
Capital Circle Office Center
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Re: Request for Comments on Development of Solar Technologies Dated April 23, 2015

Dear Ms. Tan,

The Solar Energy and Loan Fund ("SELF") hereby submits the following comments in response to your memorandum dated April 23, 2015 requesting input on enhancing development of solar technologies in Florida.

SELF appreciates the opportunity to provide input on these important issues being examined by the Florida Public Service Commission and to respond to the questions posed in the Request for Comments.

SELF is a certified a 501(c)(3) non-profit, Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) as per the U.S. Treasury Department, and we provide energy expertise and affordable financing to enable low and moderate income homeowners to identify and finance cost-effective energy, wind hazard and water conservation upgrades to their homes.

SELF began operations in 2011 after being selected as one of twenty programs in America to receive funding through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program from the United States Department of Energy (DOE).

SELF is now a statewide program headquartered in St. Lucie County, Florida, with one branch office in the City of Orlando. Currently, our target markets are the "Treasure Coast," Central and West Florida, and with additional resources we could more effectively expand throughout the entire state. Demand for our service is at an all time high and shows that there is a strong need for these programs.

SELF micro-loans help working class people make much needed home energy improvements while lowering their operating costs and improving their quality of life. To date, SELF clients have reduced their energy consumption by an average of 23% per household.

The sustainable type of improvements financed by SELF also increases the value of

properties and contribute to the revitalization of underserved residential neighborhoods. In the process, our activities also spur economic development activity through the employment of local contractors who are hired to complete these projects. We currently have over 100 approved contractors in our network.

Since 2011, SELF has completed over 1000 energy audits, which help low and moderate income homeowners identify opportunities to reduce energy costs, and we have closed over 400 residential loans totaling \$3.4 million. What makes SELF unique is the fact that 70% of our loan activity has been in low and moderate income census tracts, and 40% of our loans have been for women. We have special programs for women in distress and Veterans.

We encourage the Commission to work with stakeholders to design demand-side solar energy programs. We strongly encourage setting a goal and pool of funds dedicated for low and moderate income homeowners. With the advent of such a program SELF could leverage significant non-governmental resources (likely 10:1 or more) from banks, impact investors, faith-based organizations, and even worldwide crowdfunding (I.e., Kiva.org). We encourage the PSC to work with SELF and others to develop additional micro-financing options to help serve more working class families in the Sunshine State.

Sincerely,

Doug Coward

Executive Director
Solar Energy and Loan Fund
2400 Rhode Island Ave
Fort Pierce, FL 34950
[\(772\) 468-1818](tel:(772)468-1818)
E-Mail: dougc@solarenergyloanfund.org