

February 25, 2019

Hi, my name is Andrew Clark, and I am an instructor at Cloud County Community College in renewable energy technology. To begin, I want to let you know that I have six students with me today from our brand new Solar Energy Technology program. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in bringing this bill to reality as I think the solar industry desperately needs this bill to pass.

I am fairly new to the solar industry, but I am profoundly vested in renewable energy in Kansas as I was involved in the wind energy movement that happened in 2008 and I remember it vividly. This wind energy movement happened as I was taking classes at CCCC. Today, no one can doubt the results that the wind energy movement has brought to Kansas, and many, many communities are experiencing the benefits of the wind farms in their area.

Now, we stand at a crossroads for the solar industry that is challenging Kansas to get a movement sparked. It is time to stand in support of Solar. Our program started by getting approval back in April of 2018 for solar energy technology and had a pilot program offered over that summer consisting of 12 students, which ended in us building our own solar farm of 200 kilowatts to benefit the college. Three of those students graduated in December and went to Nebraska to get a job in solar because of the uncertainty in Kansas that has caused many people to reconsider buying solar.

Also, because of the Westar case, a few of the small cooperatives have joined in the practice of charging discriminatory fees for self-generation customers, which makes a case for solar a difficult sale. I came here today in the hopes that my voice will be heard as a small solar business owner in Kansas and of the renewable energy technology instructor position I hold. I feel that the industry needs a positive ruling on this bill as this is the last year of the full 30% federal tax credit and module pricing is at an all-time low.

Now is the time, this year, to make a difference and get the solar industry foundation built up before it slips away and jobs, companies, a whole industry leaves the state for better prospects. States like Missouri that pay an incentive for solar installations on top of the federal tax credit. Customers in Kansas City with KCP&L get hit with fees on the Kansas side of state line road and incentives on the Missouri side. In Nebraska, many cities in the state are purchasing solar and passing the savings onto the residents because of how cheap solar is to install on an industrial scale. They're signing long term contracts at a fixed rate with the idea that there is no fuel cost that continues to fluctuate.

All the states around us are going into solar, while Kansas is going backward. Let's get this course corrected before it's too late to turn this around. Thanks for your time.

Thanks,

Andrew Clark
Renewable Energy Technology Instructor
Cloud County Community College