



Scott G. Munro
Perkins Director

In the Matter of the Community Solar Energy Program

Docket No. QO22030153

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Solarlandscape, I am writing to support the Community Solar Energy Program and its transition to a permanent Program.

Mercer County Technical Schools are leading the way in providing training programs for a more equitable and greener economy. The workforce training provided to our teachers (**free of charge**) for our students and teachers provided by Solar Landscape as part of the Community Solar program provides invaluable, industry recognized programs that help us fulfill our mission. It is our hope that the BPU continues to operate the program on a competitive basis to ensure companies are motivated to provide the highest quality training and educational programs that will benefit the students in our district and in the state.

Technical training programs, such as solar panel installer training, can help our students learn the skills they need and prepare for certification exams in a short time frame. This allows you to move into the workplace faster and minimize the costs of your education.

The benefits my organization and our community members have received from community solar are at risk if the BPU does not implement the following as part of the Permanent Program:

- 1. The BPU should continue to award community solar projects through a competitive scoring process.** My organization has seen an extraordinary level of support (financial and otherwise) from solar companies as a direct result of those companies' competing for my organization's partnership in order to score points on their project applications. And my organization's constituents have been direct beneficiaries of discounts and other perks from solar companies wanting to win over customers. Changing to a first-come-first-served project-selection process would eliminate these substantial benefits of the competitive process.
- 2. The BPU should award more community solar projects.** Community solar projects provide real, tangible benefits to my organization and my organization's constituents, many of whom cannot benefit from traditional residential solar (e.g., because they do not own their homes and/or live in buildings without suitable rooftops). Community solar is the best – and, in

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many cases, only – way for my community members to get the savings and other benefits of green energy. We need more community solar.

3. The BPU should reduce barriers to low-income and moderate-income (LMI) subscribers. Households that have “low income” or “moderate income” should be able to qualify as LMI customers for community solar without needing to jump through invasive hoops (e.g., proving that they are on food stamps). If someone swears in writing that he or she qualifies as having low income or moderate income, that should be enough. Asking for more deters residents from wanting to sign up for the community solar program.

Thank you for considering these comments. We look forward to continuing to promote clean energy equity in our community.

Sincerely,

Scott G. Munro

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