

May 31, 2022

Secretary of the Board

NJ Board of Public Utilities

44 South Clinton Avenue, 1st Floor

Post Office Box 350

Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

Re: Docket No. QO21101186

Dear Secretary of the Board,

I am providing you with my comments and concerns on Competitive Solar Incentive Program and the solar citing being proposed by this docket. I am concerned with the waiver process to reach maximum calculated acreage in the ADA areas. Any waiver should have to go thru the respective county Agriculture Development Board for review and allow for public comments. Also, all solar on farmland should get BPU approval prior to requesting local approvals. There should be standards for distance required away from residences, some towns may have 50 feet and others may have 300 feet. The people that live next to these solar industrial power plants are going to be dealing with a lifetime of negative effects. Furthermore, the calculated area for solar in the County ADA should account for all setbacks not just the area under the solar panels, I'm not sure I read anywhere how this is calculated. Waivers for pinelands and highlands preservation area are not fully defined, and this should have public hearings to allow any waivers in those areas as well. The state should also track farmland for solar panels outside of the ADA on farm assessed land and also track the usage of the non prime and statewide important farmlands for use as solar panels. The acreage chart should also limit the amount of solar allowed in one town or township. For example Harmony Township NJ has 600 acres of approved solar, and several hundred more acres being proposed. There should be a cap of acres per township based on farmland acres and number of townships in each county. Some townships even at this time don't have solar regulations, so there should be a requirement that for using the solar incentive program all towns and townships are required to have local solar regulations. The state should also track farmland and solar that is being proposed as "dual use" where farming and solar continue together. The solar incentive program should do more to promote solar panels on malls, warehouses, and dual use of parking lots rather than the continued destruction of the little remaining agriculture land New Jersey has left. Another unknown is the fact that most of solar is leases and farmland preservation doesn't look at leases for land preservation values. The program should redo the state land preservation appraisals process as part of this incentive and require the lease prices per acre to be made public in order for the state county and towns to be competitive with land preservation offers. The amount of new applications for land preservation is way down probably due to solar and warehouses. If anyone on this board hasn't explored the wide open farmland spaces of Salem and Cumberland County they need to in order to appreciate the working landscape beauty and what's still here before it's all destroyed

Sincerely,

Jason Menegus

Belvidere, NJ

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