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Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 2:28 PM
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission
Subject: RICAP Item #30 Testimony



RICAP Testimony April 28, 2015

Good Afternoon. My name is Katie Martin and I am here today representing the Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association, Neil Kelly Solar and finally – as an individual in the solar industry and citizen of the City of Portland.

I would first like to thank the committee for their continued efforts to remedy the code. RICAP 7 #30 addresses a very important solar topic.

With regards to design overlay districts; we are now able to the tilt arrays on flat roof applications without going through expensive and lengthy design reviews. The code has stated previously that arrays must be laid “parallel to the roof”. This is a great change and clarification to planning and zoning codes that will benefit a great number of installations.

Moving forward we would like to ask that the City continue to support clean energy in the form of rooftop solar installation in design, conservation and other overlay districts. The next step would be to address setback and screening requirements. Planning and zoning code continues to place a greater weight on line of sight and aesthetics for solar installations than I believe is necessary. In this city of all cities – our building should wear their solar proudly, respectfully and most importantly – safely.

The environmental and economic benefits of solar are far reaching. Portland hosts a significant solar resource. For example – we have 73% as much solar as Dallas TX. This makes solar a major way of reducing carbon and our reliance on fossil fuels. Portland metro also boasts a strong industry. From manufactures of modules and racking to designers and installers such as myself, solar can drive a local economy towards clean energy and quality jobs. For these reasons and many others we need to wholly support solar with our codes.

OSSC Life-Safety Solar Provisions require 3’ setbacks on (3) sides of a solar roof in flat roof applications. We ask that future RICAP work looks to make the planning and zoning requirements more consistent with these provisions, and also more constant with each project. Please consider reviewing and easing setback requirements in future revisions of the code. These revisions would allow more solar to be installed in most applications. This will maximize the investment and benefit from each installation for our industry, our City and our environment.

Thank you for your time this afternoon.

Kind Regards,

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