

SOLAR ACTION ALERT

HR 4300

Congressmen Mike Ferguson (R-NJ) has just introduced HR 4300, a bill to extend the federal tax credits for residential solar applications. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 authorized federal tax credits to homeowners and businesses that install energy-efficient solar panels on their properties. However, these tax credits expire after 2007.

Congressmen Ferguson was joined by Congressmen Udall (D-C)), Brown (R-SC), Goode (R-VA) Sanders (Ind-VT), Simmons (R-CT), Walsh and Mark Green (R-WI) in sponsoring the Clean and Green Solar Tax Act of 2005, extending the existing solar tax credits through 2011.

The proposed legislation is very short (2 pages) and simply amends two subsections of section 25D of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 by extending the end dates of the provisions by 4 years. The complete text of the legislation can be found by going to <http://thomas.loc.gov/> and searching for HR 4300.

DISCUSSION

The importance of HR 4300 is two-fold.

FIRST, the here today/gone tomorrow nature of federal tax credits for renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies confuses the marketplace. A stable, long-term tax credit program shows consumers and investors that the federal government recognizes the important role that renewable domestic energy sources will play in the future of the nation.

Research shows that the ability of tax credits to expedite the commercialization process for new technologies depends upon their being available for at least 15 years. A long-term and stable tax credit structure has served to make Germany and Japan world leaders in the development and manufacture of solar technology. The uncertain nature of U.S. renewable energy tax credits, on the other hand, has hurt U.S. companies trying to compete, both in domestic and international markets.

SECOND, it is important to show support for HR 4300 because a majority of Congress and the Administration continue to hack away at federal support of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. The negative economic, environmental and political consequences of relying on fossil fuels in general and foreign oil in particular are obvious. At a time when the federal government should be stepping up efforts to reduce the nation's energy use and bring domestically available renewable energy sources on-line, it is stepping back.

When leadership is shown, renewable energy advocates should support those with the courage to lead.

It is uncertain that HR 4300 can make it through the legislative gauntlet before Congress adjourns for the year. Whether or not the legislation can get through the House and Senate in time, it is still important to contact your Congressional delegates in both the House and the Senate to express your support for HR 4300 and appreciation for the efforts of Congressmen Ferguson and Udall and the other co-sponsors.

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATORS

A letter template for your use is provided below, but personalized messages carry the weight of 100 letter templates. Handwritten letters get the most points, then typed ones, phone calls, and last, emails. Keep the message short; make sure you make it clear that they should support HR 4300. Use the 2 discussion topics above for talking points. It is important that we have a united voice in this. If you have other requests of your representatives, include those in separate correspondence. Thank you for your support. If our leaders know what we want, they will do our will to win our vote.

Senators

Kyl, Jon- (R - AZ) Class I

730 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON DC 20510

(202) 224-4521

Web Form: <http://www.kyl.senate.gov/contact.cfm>

McCain, John- (R - AZ) Class III

241 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON DC 20510

(202) 224-2235

Web Form: <http://www.mccain.senate.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=Contact.Home>

Representatives

Contact by mail and phone are listed below.

Electronic correspondence is different for each representative. Links that take you to: <http://www.house.gov/writerep/> simply require you to type in your zip code before taking you to the correct form for your representative. If you do not know who your representative is, go to <http://www.house.gov/writerep/> and type in your zip code to get to the form.

Rick Renzi

Arizona-1st, Republican

418 Cannon HOB

Washington, DC 20515-0301

Phone: (202) 225-2315

<http://www.house.gov/renzi/email.html>

LETTER TEMPLATE (simply copy and paste the letter into the message box of the websites noted, and add appropriate names)

Dear

I am writing you to tell you how important long-term government support for solar energy is, especially for those of us in the state with the most solar resources in the country. That's why it is imperative that you support HR 4300. The negative economic, environmental, and political consequences of relying on fossil fuels in general and foreign oil in particular are obvious. The here today/gone tomorrow nature of federal tax credits for renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies confuses the marketplace. A stable, long-term tax credit program shows consumers and investors that the federal government recognizes the important role that renewable domestic energy sources will play in the future of the nation.

Research shows that the ability of tax credits to expedite the commercialization process for new technologies depends upon their being available for at least 15 years. A long-term and stable tax credit structure has served to make Germany and Japan world leaders in the development and manufacture of solar technology. The uncertain nature of U.S. renewable energy tax credits, on the other hand, has hurt U.S. companies trying to compete, both in domestic and international markets.

All conventional energy technologies that are profitable today are so because of strong government support in the past. In fact, they all won billions of dollars and long-term support in the Energy Act of 2005 as well. If renewable energy is ever to have a chance to compete, a more fair playing field has to be established. It is up to you to help lead us in the right direction. Support HR 4300 and other sustainable energy and environmental legislation.

Sincerely,