

Let's Make Sure Coloradans are Involved in Planning Our Energy Future!

Colorado's biggest utility, Xcel Energy, has launched a major outreach campaign to promote proposals it is calling "**Our Energy Future.**" These plans are detailed in several dockets filed at the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. While we applaud Xcel's plan to expand solar in Colorado, we believe that Coloradans and the solar industry--not just the utility-- deserve a say in deciding our energy future during this critical transition. Colorado was an early solar leader but is losing ground to other states with next generation solar policies. We need to recapture the momentum.

*We think it's time to bring the **Public** back to the Public Utility*

We are concerned that:

- 1) Xcel Energy is asking the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to approve policies and **rate changes that would penalize ratepayers who conserve electricity—whether they install efficient lighting and appliances or generate on-site solar energy.** We think rates should send price signals that fairly compensate consumer investments in efficiency and distributed solar generation. The company is proposing a **new "grid access charge"** for all residential customers.
- 2) Xcel Energy proposes to continue to manage and control all solar programs, while also entering the market as a competitor—a clear conflict of interest. **The utility proposes greatly expanding new Xcel-controlled solar while keeping current programs for customer owners so constrained that monthly quotas are filled in minutes.** These proposals would limit free enterprise and customer choice. Furthermore, the utility is spending millions of ratepayer dollars to make its case.
- 3) Homeowners, public agencies and small businesses with solar systems have already each invested thousands of dollars to contribute clean energy to the Xcel system. **These investments help Xcel customers by reducing the need for expensive new infrastructure and building a more resilient power system, and deliver benefits beyond their costs.** But Xcel is discouraging the growth of innovative solutions to our energy challenges and inhibiting the energy independence and free choice that Coloradans seek.



Instead we propose:

- 1) Colorado needs an independent agency to manage renewable energy programs as we embark on a transition to a clean energy future. Everyone involved needs access to the same information so that the clean energy economy is built on a platform that includes a variety of innovative products, programs and best practices.
- 2) New rates should reflect the value of energy conservation and distributed energy. We think it would be smart to test a variety of different rates, including charging more for energy during times of peak usage, and providing proper compensation to those who invest in solar energy that benefits everyone.
- 3) Colorado needs bold new solar programs to regain our clean energy leadership and support innovation and competition. These programs should ensure access for low-income residents, provide a variety of choices to customers and encourage an open solar market.

Solar now accounts for less than 2% of Xcel's electricity mix while more than half is still coal. We think it is time to move quickly towards more homegrown clean energy. Solar helps local governments manage energy costs and focus on delivering critical services to communities. Solar reduces air pollution, climate- changing emissions and water use. With no moving parts and no fuel costs, solar energy systems produce clean electricity reliably for decades. Colorado's growing solar industry – currently comprised of 400 companies employing more than 5,000 people – is building a competitive and innovative new energy economy and a better future for us all.

COLORADO SOLAR COALITION *Contact:* gosolarcolorado@gmail.org

Founding Signers:

Colorado Solar Energy Industries
Association (COSEIA)
Sierra Club
Environment Colorado
Colorado Renewable Energy Society
Vote Solar
Dynamic Integration
Buglet Solar Electric
Custom Solar
Soltage

Namaste
Bella Energy
Golden Solar
Capitol Solar Energy
Atlasta Solar Center
The Alliance for Solar Choice
Sunrun
The Atmosphere Conservancy
Solaris Energy

File a comment with the PUC! Be sure to include the docket number. Rate case is 16AL-0048E

- **Online:** file a public comment with the PUC on a public On-line Comment Form at: http://www.dora.state.co.us/pls/real/CCTS_oWEB.comment_form
- **Written:** fax comments to the PUC at [\(303\) 894-2532](tel:3038942532).
- **Attend a public hearing:** Thursday, June 9, 4-6 p.m. Public Utilities Commission Hearing Room/1560 Broadway, Suite 250/Denver, CO 80202