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September 24, 2015

President Michael Picker  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, Calif. 94102

Subject: Utility scale renewable energy projects in Lucerne Valley

I participated in the webinar on RETI 2.0 for 3.25 hours until I had to go to work. I was encouraged that others made many of the same comments I was unable to make due to time restrictions. Let me make them now.

Utility scale renewable energy projects generally are not economical. We taxpayers have to subsidize them in order for them to be built and then to keep them in operation.

Utility scale renewable energy projects also damage the environment. I know this because they built one less than 1,000 feet from my home in Lucerne Valley. When large acreage is scraped, wind and water erosion become major problems. Unhealthy dust becomes a problem, along with sand dunes, along with flood damage due to soils that no longer act like sponges and waterways that are diverted. See pictures attached.

Real estate values tend to drop sharply on property valuable for residences and businesses due to the blight of ugly industrial structures, noise, dust, and in some cases, traffic patterns. As in my case, my home has lost 1/2 of its value since the project near me was erected. This becomes a social injustice of the rich stealing from the poor, as the wealthy investors' projects devalue nearby parcels in which people have invested their life savings. The investors make a fast buck and the home and business owners now own property worth considerably less. Some will even go bankrupt and be unable to sell their properties, unless they do so at a great loss.

The views and unique wildlife, which many of us hold so dear, are destroyed and/or displaced.

On top of all these negatives: We are in a severe drought. Industrial scale utility projects easily consume up to 977,000 of water per acre to construct. We can't afford to waste our limited water on such ill-advised projects.

Now, let me make positive comments of what we are already doing right, is affordable, is good for the economy, is good for the environment, is good for the State, the Counties, the Country, and the home or business owner. Point of use solar distributed generation on homes, businesses, and government buildings is generally well accepted and non-offensive. I have a 5000 watt system which services my home.

Encourage the implementation of AB811 to provide low-interest loans for point of use solar installations and tax credits to encourage all private property owners to install systems on their properties. Award incentives to investors and contractors to build to zero net construction standards now and not wait until 2020.

Be sure distributed generation output estimates are included in the State mandated renewable energy targets.

Economics are pushing MANY of us to go solar. We're installing it at our business and at home. So we're putting our money where our mouth is. I know MANY of our customers and neighbors who want to do the same. Let's develop RETI 2.0 to make this happen. If this trend continues, and it will, since more of us are unable to keep up with quickly rising power bills, California, and the nation will soon have a SURPLUS of energy available.

Sincerely,

  
John C Monohan