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## **Texas Businesses Ask Governor Perry to Support Solar Power**

### **New Report Highlights the Strength of Texas' Solar Industry will provide Opportunities for Economic Development and Job Creation**

AUSTIN –The Texas economy stands to see a considerable boost as a result of increases in the solar market, according to [Lone Star Power: How Texas Can Supply the World with Solar Energy](#), a new report released by Environment Texas and the Go Solar Texas Coalition. The groups released a letter to Governor Perry, signed by over 80 businesses, including Texas Solar Power Company, PPG Industries, USA Wire and Cable, and Meridian Solar, calling on the Governor to boost solar investment. The coalition made the announcement in seven cities including Austin, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Houston, Tyler, and Waco.

"Texas has what it takes to be a national leader in solar power. We have the most solar radiation in the country, are home to one of the world's largest supplier of solar-grade silicon, and are innovators in the high-tech industry," said McCall Johnson the Clean Energy Advocate for Environment Texas and the author of the report.

A report produced by the Renewable Energy Policy Project, estimated that if the US had a 25% Renewable Energy Standard by 2025, over 23,000 manufacturing jobs could be created in Texas for photovoltaic technologies alone.

"For Texas to retain its status as the energy capital of the world, we must utilize the sun as an energy source. By being a leader in solar power and tapping into our tremendous resources, we can create jobs and keep money in the Texas economy," said Texas State Representative Mark Strama.

The report also shows that Texas has the potential to create a completely self sufficient solar manufacturing chain. If the state's solar market was to expand, so too would the likelihood that fully completed solar panels could be produced in Texas, without the need to outsource manufacturing.

"From glass manufacturing in Wichita Falls to Steel Fabrication in Brownwood, Texans are contributing to the solar industry. A robust solar market in Texas will allow us to retain and create jobs that otherwise may move or be established in other states or overseas to countries like China," said Johnson.

The report finds that Texas businesses are positioned to provide the world with many of the components of solar energy systems, bringing investment dollars and high-paying jobs to the state.

Companies profiled in Lone Star Power that are currently contributing to the solar supply chain include:

- PPG Industries: a glass manufacturer with a facility producing glass in Wichita Falls for solar modules
- USA Wire and Cable: an Austin based wire and cable distributor serves the solar industry
- MEMC Pasadena : one of the world's largest producers of polysilicon, used to create crystalline photovoltaic modules
- ExelTech: engineers and manufactures inverters that convert electricity produced by solar to electricity that can be used in a general wall outlet in Fort Worth
- Barr Fabrication: a Brownwood company that provided the steel structural support for Solar One Nevada, the largest concentrating solar plant in the world

The coalition reports that 2010 will be a big year for the solar energy industry. 18% of new US and Canadian energy projects in 2010 are expected to be solar power projects with over \$30.2 billion in total investment value, surpassing both coal and natural gas.

State-provided incentives could push Texas forward in the solar movement. These changes in state policy would aim to help Texans put solar panels on their homes, expand existing businesses, and attract outside companies to build large-scale solar farms in the state.

"A statewide solar program in Texas will help drive the cost of solar down through economies of scale, providing consumers with affordable clean energy, and Texas businesses with growth opportunities," said Hugh Robertson, Vice President of USA Wire and Cable.

The Go Solar Texas Coalition is calling on Governor Perry to set a goal of developing 1000 megawatts of solar by 2015 and 5000 megawatts by 2025. The Public Utility Commission is currently considering a rule to require electric companies to obtain 500 megawatts of electricity (the size of a coal-fired power plant) from solar energy and other emerging renewable technologies by the year 2015. Implementing this rule with a 100 megawatt program to encourage distributed generation is a great first step towards reaching the 5000-megawatt goal by 2025.

The Go Solar Texas coalition also urges Texas leadership to require retail electric providers to offer fair buyback rates for energy produced by solar and expand our energy efficiency goals with specific incentives for programs that promote onsite solar.

"Texas businesses are already contributing to the solar supply chain, but we need to have equally forward-thinking public policy for Texas to become a leader in solar power," concluded Johnson.

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