

**1Sky * Center for Biological Diversity * Center for Rural Affairs * Citizens Action Coalition of Indiana
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) * Clean Water Action * Climate and Energy Project
Climate Solutions * Conservation Law Foundation * Environmental Law & Policy Center
Environment America * Fresh Energy * Green For All * Greenpeace * League of Conservation Voters
Michigan Environmental Council * National Wildlife Federation * Natural Resources Defense Council
Oceana * Public Policy Virginia * Sierra Club * Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Sustainable Energy & Economy Network * the Wilderness Society * Union of Concerned Scientists
Vote Solar**

June 15, 2010

Dear Senators Reid, McConnell, Durbin and Kyl:

On behalf of our millions of members and activists, we urge you to pass a two year extension of the Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program for renewable energy development. Investing in clean energy will help put our economy on a stable, long-term path to growth and job creation, all while avoiding emissions that contribute to global warming, protecting our nation's treasured places, and directing economic development to the most appropriate places.

The difficulty of securing debt and tax equity financing in the current economic recession has created challenges for businesses and entrepreneurs considering investments in new renewable energy projects. To help address this problem, Section 1603 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act authorized the Department of Treasury to issue grants, in lieu of the long-standing tax credits, to renewable energy facilities that are placed in service or that commence construction by the end of 2010.

The program has been a success, boosting wind and solar deployment far above industry projections in a difficult economic climate. It has already supported 17,000 additional solar and related jobs according to the Solar Energy Industries Association and over 55,000 jobs in the wind and geothermal industries according to the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories, while bringing 4,250 MW of renewable power projects online in 2009 alone.

The debt and tax equity markets are beginning to recover, but renewable projects still face difficulties obtaining sufficient project capital at competitive rates. Without a prompt extension of the program, we will face a slowdown in renewable energy development at a time when the United States is regaining its momentum as a leader in the renewable energy industry. America has the potential to be the world's largest market for solar technology and possesses some of the best onshore and offshore wind resources in the entire world. Ongoing incentives coupled with a strong renewable electricity standard and support for domestic clean energy manufacturing and innovation will help the U.S. realize this potential.

According to the independent research firm EuPD, extending the Treasury Grant Program by two years will add nearly 65,000 new jobs from solar development alone by 2015 and over 5,000 megawatts of additional clean, reliable solar energy by 2016. Incorporating the value of increased employment and tax revenues from this program will lead to a net savings for the government of \$400 million between 2010 and 2016.

Large scale renewable energy projects can take several months to arrange financing. Extension of this deadline is necessary to ensure that projects in the pipeline that are relying on this program continue to progress. Without an immediate extension, many of these projects will not be able to secure financing and move forward.

We urge you to pass an extension of this critical renewable energy program as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

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