

**Testimony
of
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DC Council Committee on Transportation and Environment
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Thank you, Chairperson Cheh, and members of the committee, for holding this hearing today.

As you know, Solar United Neighbors (previously DC SUN, and before that a collection of Solar Cooperatives across DC starting with the Mt. Pleasant Solar Cooperative) has been advocating for solar and working with the DC Council on Solar related issues since 2007. In that time, we helped more than 480 homeowners go solar, installing 2,675 kW (though we only started keeping good records in 2014).

I am here to testify in support of the Solar Cooperative Association Expansion Amendment Act and the Solar Ready Roofs and Sustainable Development Amendment Act, and to discuss DC's Solar for All Program.

We support B22-229, Solar Cooperative Association Expansion Amendment Act of 2017. In general, the bill contains good ideas and is consistent with legislation we are seeing around the country that limits HOAs and other cooperative housing from unreasonably restricting solar.

On B22-437, the Solar Ready Roofs and Sustainable Development Amendment Act of 2017, we think the legislation is a great idea, but believe the bill requires refinement. The concept of building readiness is key and brilliant. New buildings in the District should be built with the idea that solar will be added. That might include a different orientation of roof, dormers, decks, skylights, elevators or HVAC equipment. We should challenge our architects to optimize on-site generation as well as energy efficiency. Depending on the size, and shape of the building (for example a very tall skinny building), the target 10% might be impossible to achieve, at least with currently available market ready technology— though this may change significantly as new technologies like higher efficiency panels and solar windows enter the market.

As you are refining this bill, one area I would encourage you to look at is the design of single family low income housing. As we are already committing significant DC rate-payer funds to provide solar to these homes—it seems obvious that they should be built to optimize that investment. As you walk around DC, you often see

new developments with a single slanted roof facing north, or strange dormers that look cute but break up the roof surface in a way that makes solar very complicated and uneconomical! What a loss, what a shame, what a wasted opportunity. Furthermore, those houses should be aiming for at least 50% of energy to come from solar. Really, new energy efficient LMI single family homes should be designed to cover 90% of their energy needs with roof-top solar.

On Solar for All, I need to first explain that we are very proud to be the recipient of an award to implement the program for 215 single-family low income homeowners. However, we are still working out the details to finalize terms and begin implementation.

My primary concern is that DOEE needs to begin implementation of 2018 Solar for All program funding immediately. The current round of grants is designed to explore and address program implementation barriers. While the results of that round are coming in and being digested, my suggestion is that DOEE move quickly toward a program designed to buy solar production rather than developing individual solar projects.

The current program goes into detail on solar project development. If DOEE instead offered to buy the generation of any community solar facility, it could take advantage of projects being built now and stimulate additional new projects that are currently languishing because of investor concerns about the risks associated with subscriber off-take. Subscriptions could then be issued by DOEE to LIHEAP applicants. By de-risking subscriptions, DOEE would find the low hanging fruit to build a pipeline of projects for the program.

We can't wait until the initial round of grants is done before launching into round two, and three. Solar for All is too important.

Thank you.