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12-15-18

Support of Solar Freedom Bill – Kathie Hoekstra

My ask today is for you individually or collectively to support the Solar Freedom Bill in the upcoming legislative session which would remove the current unnecessary legislative barriers to distributive solar also known as roof top solar.

As you may recall when I spoke here last time I talked about installing solar panels on my home and the result being that I had not paid an electric bill since April over \$10. To my amazement and apparently to some of you as well – I received a round of applause.

You too can receive the same round of applause if you were to remove the current barriers to more solar energy in Alexandria and it adds nothing to the Alexandria budget!

7 of the 8 barriers in this bill would directly benefit Alexandria residents - these include:

- 1) Per your existing legislative ask – allow solar power collected at one local government property to power another government property in the jurisdiction;
- 2) Increase the maximum size allowed for local government solar projects to 5MW – so buildings which are best suited for solar could take the highest advantage of that situation;
- 3) Allow owners of multi-family residential units to sell solar to their tenants. This could be REALLY helpful for affordable housing units, since landlords could pass their reduced electric costs savings on to tenants;
- 4) Allow property owners such as myself to add enough solar panels to exceed last's year energy demand. This would have allowed me to anticipate higher electric bills from getting an electric car;
- 5) Allow solar output to be used on multiple buildings on a customer's property. The example given here is that in Lorton they have an old landfill – they'd like to put solar panels on the landfill but the law prevents them from really taking advantage of this because of 4 different unnecessary impediments, - here numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5. I bet Alexandria owns property which could take advantage of this change as well;
- 6) Increase the allowed size of non-residential solar projects from 1 to 2MW; and
- 7) Eliminate standby charges on 10-20 KW residential solar projects. The main reason for my low electric bills is because I'm not an average family – I have a 7KW system for one person – but an average family would need a larger system. But right now the highest they could go would be 9.9 KW or they'd have to pay standby fees which would offset any lower costs from the solar panels. Their electric bills would be less – but they'd still have bills higher than mine

So please support the Solar Freedom bill sponsored by Delegate Mark Keam and Senator Jennifer McClellan so you can tell your kids and your voters – you took direct action to combat climate change which added nothing to the Alex budget.

