End the Utility Power Grab

SOLAR CUSTOMERS DESERVE FAIR CREDIT WITH NET METERING

Like rollover minutes on a cell phone bill, net metering gives renewable energy customers fair credit on their utility bills for the excess clean power they contribute to the grid. This simple billing arrangement is one of the most important state policies for encouraging investment in solar.

Net metering benefits solar and non-solar customers alike.

- Saves on expensive and polluting conventional power
- Saves on investment in transmission and distribution infrastructure
- Reduces electricity lost over the wires
- Saves on cost of managing power delivery
- Saves on cost of meeting carbon and renewable requirements

In California, net metering grid benefits outweigh the costs by $92.2 Million per year. Actual costs and benefits are specific to each utility. However, the size of California’s solar market and its unique tiered rate structure make it a strong test bed for the economics of net metering. A net benefit in California indicates a likely net benefit in many other states as well.
The utilities’ tricky math doesn’t add up.

Some utilities claim that net metering is not cost-effective for non-solar ratepayers, but time and again they use inaccurate numbers to make their case:

**Utilities claim** there are almost no cost-saving benefits of net metering.

Individual customer investment in solar delivers high value power, creating a host of benefits to the grid including savings on conventional generation, transmission and distribution investments, line losses, and avoided environmental compliance costs. But the utilities’ math usually counts only the first benefit, at most.

**Utilities claim** that solar should be treated differently than other customer behaviors that reduce electricity use.

Most solar output is used onsite without ever reaching the grid. This power places no burden on the utility system, and yet utilities are accounting for it as if it’s a cost. Just like with energy efficiency, any reduction in a customer’s energy use due to onsite solar generation should not be viewed as a stranded cost by utilities.

**Overinflated cost claims**

Utility cost claims are a **red herring**.

Where is the same outcry on behalf of ratepayers for these recent costs?

- Coloradans are paying $1.3 Billion for a new coal plant with a poor operational track record
- Duke Energy is charging Indiana ratepayers $2.6 Billion of the $3.5 Billion it cost to build a single coal plant
- Florida has approved $1.3 Billion in ratepayer costs for nuclear power plants that may never get built
- An out-of-service San Onofre nuclear power plant cost Southern California ratepayers $820 Million in 2012

**Net metering works for America.**

- **43 States** and the District of Columbia have net metering policies
- $6 **Billion** in economic activity in 2012
- **119 Thousand** jobs in the high growth solar sector
- **3.9 Gigawatts** enough solar to power 300,000 American homes

Net metering is good for ratepayers, the economy and the environment.

**The interests of a few monopoly utilities should not outshine the rest of us.**

Learn more at www.protectnetmetering.org

**Prepared by: The Vote Solar Initiative**