

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Dear Friend:

Most Mt. Pleasant Solar Coop members know the DC Department of the Environment hired no staff to administer the program, causing many to drop out of the program and creating a backlog in Renewable Energy Incentive Program ("REIP") applications, solar PV installations and cutting rebate checks -- some of which remain outstanding.

As a result, only \$600,000 of the \$2 million of utility rate payer money set aside for the program was spent on REIP during its first year of operation. We currently have no clear accounting for the rest of the money. This year, things seem to have gotten worse: there are still no full time staff hired to manage the program, there have been no official communications to the 214 folks stuck on the waiting list, and installation season is upon us—with no contracts in sight, no movement forward and green jobs dying on the vine in the District of Columbia.

We met on March 3 with our Councilmember, Jim Graham, earlier this month. He proposed a joint Roundtable with Councilmember Mary Cheh (who authored Act #A17-0497, the Clean and Affordable Energy Act of 2008, creating REIP) to find ways to overcome DDoE's mismanagement. **That hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, March 30th at 11:00 a.m. in the District Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, in room 412 (N.B.: you must present photo ID to enter the building).**

In addition to our members, we are inviting other Solar Coops, our installers, others working in green job training and conservation and efficiency, local small business people and renters who want to be able to go solar, and other green organizations to join with us to take a stand for clean energy. A copy of the Roundtable notice is attached.

It's important for every Mt. Pleasant Solar Coop member -- past, current or prospective - who can to join with us for this Roundtable. Please e-mail or phone Aukima Benjamin, staff member for the Committee on Government Operations and the Environment and ask to be placed on the witness list:

E-mail: ABenjamin@dccouncil.us

Phone: 202.724.8062.

Please prepare a short statement about your experience with the REIP program: its importance to you, problems with the applications, problems with getting your rebate check, positive experiences, cash flow issues related to delays, hopes for the future, potential for employment with your company related to the program and any other relevant issues.

Please be so kind as to contact me at solarcoop@yahoo.com and let me know if you can join us. ***Bring your friends and families and take a stand with us for carbon reduction, cheaper power, and empowering consumers to become producers!***

Sincerely,

Anya Schoolman
President, Mt. Pleasant Solar Coop
solarcoop@yahoo.com

attachment: Roundtable notice

Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Government Operations and the Environment
Notice of Public Oversight Roundtable
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20004

COUNCILMEMBER MARY M. CHEH, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Announces a Public Oversight Roundtable on
Implementation of the Renewable Energy Incentive Program

March 30, 2010

11:00 AM

Room 412

John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

On Tuesday, March 30, 2010, Councilmember Mary M. Cheh, Chairperson of the Committee on Government Operations and the Environment, will hold a public oversight roundtable on the implementation of the Renewable Energy Incentive Program (REIP). The REIP was established by section 209 of the Clean and Affordable Energy Act of 2008 in order to provide rebates to owners of new renewable energy generation systems in the District. The purpose of the roundtable is to examine the implementation of the REIP and to determine whether any legislative or other reforms to the program are necessary. The public oversight roundtable will begin at 11:00 a.m. in Room 412 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Anyone wishing to testify at the hearing should contact Aukima Benjamin, Staff Assistant to the Committee on Government Operations and the Environment, at 724-8062, or via e-mail at abenjamin@dccouncil.us. Witnesses should bring 10 copies of their written testimony and submit a copy of their testimony electronically to tmoir@dccouncil.us. Representatives of organizations will be allowed a maximum of five (5) minutes for oral presentation, and individuals will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes for oral presentation.

If you are unable to testify at the hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record. Copies of written statements should be submitted either to the Committee on Government Operations and the Environment, or to Ms. Cynthia Brock-Smith, Secretary to the Council, Room 5 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004. The record will close at the end of the business day on April 13, 2010.