

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 30, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you work with Congress to craft legislation that will spur job creation, we urge you to consider legislation that will not only create jobs but also set the stage for our long-term prosperity. To that end, we recently introduced the Solar Manufacturing Jobs Creation Act to encourage investment in America's solar energy manufacturing industry, which will create jobs, make us more energy secure, and reduce global warming pollution. We know that you share these goals, so we wish to work with you to include this legislation in any jobs or clean energy bill that Congress considers in the near future.


The Solar Manufacturing Jobs Creation Act builds on the progress toward clean energy that was marked by the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The recovery package invested more than \$45 billion in programs and more than \$21 billion in tax incentives to initiate a transition to a clean energy economy.

While the recovery package has been a good start, there is more we can do to create jobs while positioning the United States as the leader in the technology that will power the 21st century global economy. It is with considerable dismay that we note that the United States is falling behind other countries in this critical competition. For example, a decade ago the United States accounted for more than 40% of the world's solar photovoltaic (PV) cells, but in 2008 we produced just 5% of the world's PV cells. Countries like China, Germany, and Japan are leading the way in attracting private capital by establishing powerful incentives for investing in solar manufacturing. It is time for those technologies and the jobs that accompany them to be found right here in America.

Our legislation would create jobs here at home while setting the stage for economic growth for decades to come. It would make investments in equipment used to manufacture solar energy technology eligible for the existing 30 percent tax credit for installation of residential and business solar energy systems. The tax credit will spur investment in solar energy, which creates more jobs per megawatt of energy produced than any other form of energy. What's more, the impact of the legislation would be immediate, with firms having an incentive to make their investments early in order to capitalize on the refundable credit. For these reasons, in 2010 alone our legislation is projected to create nearly 7,200 jobs in solar energy manufacturing and 2,700 construction jobs to build new plants, yielding nearly 9,990 direct jobs created. The figure increases to 12,000 jobs when indirect jobs at upstream suppliers are included. As solar firms create jobs and innovate, so will America move forward as the global leader in clean energy technology, improving our energy security while combating global warming.

As our economy recovers, ensuring that job creation happens as soon as possible is our highest priority. As we proceed, let us take advantage of this opportunity to position our nation as the clean energy leader for the 21st century. Our legislation would move us in that direction. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to working together to create jobs and set the stage for America's long-term economic leadership.


Sincerely,



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator



MICHAEL BENNET
United States Senator



RON WYDEN
United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator