

Honourable Bob Chiarelli
Ministry of Energy
4th Floor, Hearst Block,
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2E1

REJECTION OF FIT 2.1 PROJECT APPLICATIONS IN OTTAWA

29th May 2013

Dear Honourable Minister,

As solar power stakeholders in Ottawa, we were particularly hopeful about opportunities for local solar businesses and community enterprises to participate in, and benefit from, the OPA's new Feed-In Tariff (FIT) 2.1 program. Important progress has already been made in the transition to a greener, cleaner energy system in Ontario and the new program was eagerly anticipated.

Unfortunately, we are concerned and frustrated that once again, many of the groups who have worked so hard to develop local solar power over the last decade are being shut out from the process. An initial survey of solar co-operatives and businesses in the Ottawa area shows that out of 61 FIT 2.1 applications submitted by Ottawa companies, at least 50 have received rejection notices. No clear explanations have been given for these rejections and when details have been provided upon request, the reasons given are in many cases questionable and definitely worth dispute.

The directive of the Ministry regarding the prioritization of projects that engage community members and municipalities as well as those were submitted to the FIT 1 program has not had the opportunity to be applied because all efforts were made to reject applications for any reason prior to the prioritization process. This has been an incredible waste of time, money, and good will in Ontario and is definitely not the way to build the world class green energy sector that is possible for Ontario.

Unless something is done to salvage the situation, all of the work done by your department to encourage more community ownership, municipal engagement, and urban solar development will be jeopardized and the potential to develop renewable projects in Ottawa and create local employment will be foregone. A large amount of goodwill will have been squandered!

Our concerns about the FIT 2.1 Program:

- The recent small FIT 2 application window was delayed for many months (then opened over the Christmas holidays), was very short, involved many complex and time consuming application rules, and is capped at 200 MW of capacity.
- The total number of applications to this small FIT window represent over 825 MW of capacity, showing the huge potential in this size range.
- **At least 82% of the applications have been rejected at the screening stage of FIT 2.1 for a number of unexplained reasons regardless of the priority points given to those projects.**

Recommendations

Do not delay any of the approved projects. For the projects that were rejected, we recommend an immediate response from your office in the form a directive to the OPA to provide:

- i) **A cure period for rejected FIT 2.1 applications that contain minor errors, and**

ii) An immediate, additional small FIT window for rejected FIT 2.1 applications in which assistance is provided by the OPA to community applicants to finalize acceptable projects.

The 1000 Solar Rooftops Network is a collaboration of citizens, businesses, and non-profits in the Ottawa area. In 2010, community organizations, solar businesses, municipal partners, academic institutions, and interested citizens launched the 1000 Solar Rooftops Challenge in Ottawa. The Network works to engage, enlighten and enable the citizens of Ottawa to participate in the opportunities for solar power presented in the *Green Energy and Green Economy Act*. We are particularly interested in seeing communities get directly involved in the ownership of solar energy as it expands the awareness of sustainable energy issues.

From the examples of Germany and Spain, we see that it is possible to achieve over 50% of renewable energy generation as community- and citizen-owned and billions of dollars invested locally. We have a tremendous opportunity here in Ontario to generate wealth at the local level and build more resilient communities while transitioning to an internationally-competitive green energy economy.

We are tremendously proud of the work of our Network in mobilising support for solar energy at the local level here in Ottawa. Many of us have been working for years to bring projects to fruition to enable community benefit from the green energy developments in our city. With the latest FIT round, we are worried that again, the people of Ontario will be left out. We urge you to act quickly on an immediate directive to the OPA as described above and we request a meeting with you in Ottawa to discuss these issues further.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



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The 1000 Solar Rooftops Network is made up of the following businesses and organizations:

- The Delphi Group
- Community Energy Network
- Tucker House Renewal Centre
- City of Ottawa
- Ottawa Renewable Energy Co-operative
- iSolara Solar Power
- Ottawa Solar Power
- SolPowered
- SolarLogix
- Climate Action Network
- Ottawa Sustainability Fund
- Water & Earth Sciences Associates
- Energy Ottawa
- Hydro Ottawa
- Leadership Ottawa
- Faith and the Common Good
- Sustainable Ottawa
- Carleton University
- Ecology Ottawa
- Lumos Energy