

Don't Let the Electric Monopolies Block Out the Sun! Tell Your State Legislators to Oppose SB309

Senate Bill 309: Distributed Generation

Distributed generation generally refers to small energy generation resources which are on-site, or very near to the site of where the energy will be consumed. Typically, distributed energy resources use renewable energy, like wind and solar. Examples would include solar panels on the roof of a home, or a wind turbine at a school or a farm. The utilities are attacking rooftop solar and small-scale wind because it allows customers to compete with them. They are monopolies and they see any type of competition as a threat. They want our State Legislators to protect them from ANY competition, especially the kind that allows us to keep our money in our own pockets. Here are the highlights of what SB309 will do:



- **Prohibits NEW net metering in Indiana in 5 years.**

Net metering allows you to generate electricity and get credited for it at the same price that you pay for it. (Net metering is discussed in more detail on the back.) SB309 places a permanent prohibition on net metering in 5 years and ends net metering permanently in 30 years (2047). After 2022, even if your utility wanted to offer net metering, the law would prevent them from doing so. Existing net metering customers who interconnect by July 1, 2017 will be "grandfathered" and allowed to net meter until 2047. Customers who interconnect between July 1, 2017 and July 1, 2022, will be allowed to net meter until 2032.

- **Fixes utility rates into law for the benefit of the monopoly utilities.**

SB309 will mandate that the utilities must credit you at rates that are only slightly higher than the average wholesale rate for the electricity you generate and send to the grid. Even though the utility will sell the electricity from your solar panels to your neighbor at the full retail rate (between 11¢-16¢ per kilowatt hour, depending on the utility), they will only have to credit you at a rate that is slightly higher than the wholesale rate, which at today's prices would be approximately 3.5¢ per kilowatt hour.

- **Is a RATE HIKE for ALL customers.**

SB309 steals the economic benefits of solar away from all customers and gives it to the utilities. SB309 significantly raises the monthly bills of solar customers by drastically reducing the credit which they receive and by allowing the utility to charge them unfair monthly charges on their bills. SB309 will also raise the monthly bills of ALL customers. It allows the utilities to hike our bills quarterly to force ALL customers to pay for the credits the utilities give to solar customers for the electricity they are putting onto the grid. Net metering is a benefit for all customers; SB309 steals that benefit and gives it to the utilities.

- **Prices rooftop solar (and small-scale wind) out of the market.**

By setting their own rules and prices, utilities will make rooftop solar and wind so unaffordable that nobody will be able to do it. This will not only reduce consumer choices, it will lead to job losses and a significant reduction in investment in clean energy in our state, leaving Indiana farther behind than we already are.

Take Action: Your voice matters!

Contact your State Senator and Representative.
 Tell them:

- To say NO to RATE HIKES and OPPOSE SB309
- Net metering is a benefit to ALL customers
- Don't let the monopoly electric utilities take our sunshine away!

To look up and/or
 e-mail your legislators, visit:
<http://iga.in.gov/legislative/find-legislators/>

Indiana Senate

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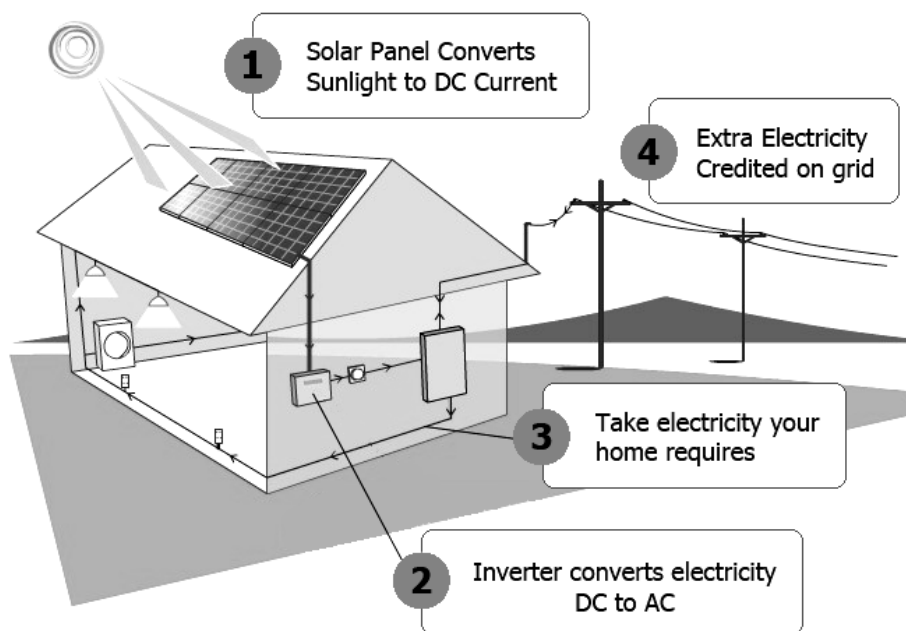
Indiana House of Representatives

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Here Comes the Sun: Solar Energy is Booming in the U.S.

The cost to install solar has dropped over 60% in the last five years. Over one million Americans have now installed solar on their homes. As a result, the electric utility monopolies feel threatened, fearing an erosion of their revenues and a decline in their profits. Therefore, they have begun a nationwide campaign to stifle the rooftop solar industry by attempting to make rooftop solar more expensive to install by changing the rules of the game.

The utilities' favorite target is a policy known as net metering. In 41 states including Indiana, net metering is the law of the land. Net metering is the instrumental policy which has driven the growth in the residential rooftop solar market. The utilities are working to convince state legislators across the country that net metering is a subsidy which needs to be eliminated.



Net Metering and the “Subsidy” Myth

Net metering is a billing arrangement between a customer with a renewable energy system on their property and an electric utility. When the system is generating more electricity than a customer is using, the energy is added to the grid and the customer is credited at the same rate that they pay for the energy they consume from the grid. It's an even swap. The customer "banks" kilowatt hours to be used later - there is no payment and no checks are sent to the customer.

The utilities would have you believe that net metering in Indiana is a subsidy. They are attempting to sell a false narrative that if you have solar on your roof, your neighbor is paying your electric bill. This is unfounded and not supported by any evidence. Furthermore, the net metering customer still pays monthly customer charges, the costs of overhead such as billing and meter reading, in addition to paying the full retail rate for any electricity they use. The idea that net metering customers do not pay an electric bill every month is simply not true.

Regulatory commissions and state legislatures across the country have analyzed and studied net metering, weighing the costs and the benefits of net metering policies. The Brookings Institution examined ten of the more formal and thorough of those studies and concluded that, "A growing number show that net metering benefits all utility customers." (<https://www.brookings.edu/research/rooftop-solar-net-metering-is-a-net-benefit/>) They continued and added:

"In short, while the conclusions vary, a significant body of cost-benefit research conducted by PUCs, consultants, and research organizations provides substantial evidence that net metering is more often than not a net benefit to the grid and all ratepayers."

The multiple benefits of net metering include: avoided costs of purchasing energy and building new power plants; avoided capital investments; increased grid resiliency and security; reduced carbon emissions; and reduced toxic air emissions. All of these benefits add up to lower electric bills for all, cleaner air, cleaner water and a healthier public. Net metering should be protected and expanded, not eliminated.