



**February 26, 2019**

**Chairman Frank Pallone**  
**House Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Chairman Bobby Rush**  
**Subcommittee on Energy**  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Ranking Member Greg Walden**  
**House Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Ranking Member Fred Upton**  
**Subcommittee on Energy**  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Walden, Subcommittee Chairman Rush, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Upton,

On behalf of the one thousand companies that make up the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), I write today in support of H.R. 1315, The Blue Collar to Green Collar Jobs Development Act, which provides additional support to help companies hire more Americans from diverse communities into the growing renewable energy industry.

Within the next five years, we anticipate the solar energy market in the United States to more than double in size. This important bill represents a serious investment in two of our country's top priorities – our transition to a clean energy economy and the development of our workforce. Within the solar industry, we're ushering in a clean energy revolution that's making our economy and environment stronger every day. Solar embodies American values – it gives us choice and independence, and it democratizes energy.

In order to make sure that clean, low cost solar energy is available for all, we must have a growing and dynamic workforce. SEIA members hire thousands of workers every year and a well-equipped, diverse talent pool is central to their success. Workforce development that reflects the diversity of the communities we aim to serve is one of our member companies' highest priorities. In order to meet the expected demand, the solar workforce will require tens of thousands of new employees over the next several years.

The solar economy continues to be primarily local with jobs paying above the national median average. According to The Solar Foundation's 2018 National Solar Jobs Census, the median wage for mid-level solar installers is \$32/hour for

electricians and \$28/hour for non-electricians, well above the national median of \$18/hr. Solar provides an opportunity for workers from all education levels. In fact, 79% of solar companies do not require a bachelor's degree for new hires. For those who are willing to pursue some training in solar-specific technologies, it's possible to move into sustainable, well-paying careers in as little as 12 months. Solar jobs also offer the promise of advancement. [An in-depth case study](#) by The Solar Foundation looked at several major solar installers and found that entry-level installers were typically promoted within 6 to 12 months of hire, with an average pay increase of 45%.

We must ensure that people of all races, genders, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds have access to both solar *jobs* and solar *energy* itself. Everyone deserves access to the incredible benefits of solar energy — cleaner air, lower energy bills, and well-paying jobs.

We commend the Committee for its work on this legislation and look forward to continuing this important conversation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abigail Ross Hopper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Abigail" being the most prominent.

Abigail Ross Hopper, Esq.  
President & CEO