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December 5, 2008

TO: The Office of the Governor of the State of Michigan - Jennifer Granholm

RE: Petition Concerning Economic Benefits from Renewable Energy Systems at Schools as a Result of the Implementation of Senate Bill 213

Honorable Governor Granholm:

This letter is to forward to you the collective response to date from the attached petition for the removal of barriers to entry for economic on-site renewable energy and education at Michigan schools. The petition has been signed by school officials in 135 school districts in 50 counties throughout Michigan representing 135 school districts, 153,000 students, their parents, their communities, and 9,250 teachers.

Also included are schools, businesses, individuals, and organizations outside of Michigan who have expressed their desire for a National standard to remove the barriers to on-site renewable energy and education for our Nation's schools. Collectively, this response represents more than two million students, teachers, and parents from Michigan communities and others around the country. The number of parties signing on continues to increase daily.

At a time when our schools are facing some of their toughest economic challenges, Senate Bill 213 restricts energy options that would permit economic and effective implementation of renewable energy technologies at schools. Unless changes are made to Senate Bill No. 213, Michigan schools will have no economic incentive, and little if any practical ability, to pursue alternative energy options for the benefit of our children, our communities and our environment.

Michigan students will not have access to the hands-on learning that will accompany renewable energy installations, and local communities will not experience the benefits of cleaner air and water from the use of renewable energy technologies. This would not only be unfortunate policy for the health and welfare of our State, but it would clearly be inconsistent with President-elect Obama's economic recovery plan and its cornerstone of renewable energy and education.

We appreciate your history of as a leader in transitioning our state towards energy self-reliance and commend your service record for supporting educational programming for Michigan students. Unfortunately, Senate Bill 213 places unintended barriers to meaningful economic renewable energy generation and educational benefits for Michigan schools and students. We encourage your leadership in correcting this oversight.

To illustrate what can be done in Michigan and across the Nation, recent legislation in Nevada has allowed Clark County School District (Las Vegas, NV) to pursue on-site renewable energy generation and efficiencies from third party developers. A developer based in Michigan has won the opportunity to provide those programs for the first ten schools in Clark County.

“Clark County School District has 310,000 students and 30,000 staff. We are unable to acquire renewable energy equipment and this legislation allows third parties to buy the equipment, install it at schools, and sell us energy at long-term reduced rates saving the District money. District students also receive a hands-on education curriculum with scholarships for higher education”, said J. Paul Gerner, Associate Superintendent of Facilities.

Benefits to students, school districts, and communities will be immediate and long-lasting. It will be tragic if Michigan schools and students are prevented from receiving the same economic and educational benefits as those provided by a Michigan developer to schools and students in other states.

- 1) STUDENT BENEFITS:
 - a. Hands-on green energy instructional units and virtual green learning centers
 - b. College scholarships for students interested in pursuing renewable energy careers
- 2) SCHOOL BENEFITS:
 - a. Predictable rates for electricity, with a guaranteed rate structure below current and future utility rates
 - b. No capital investment by the schools
 - c. No use of school tax money
- 3) COMMUNITY BENEFITS:
 - a. Increased community awareness of the potential of renewable energy resources
 - b. Improved environment from decreased use of fossil fuels for energy generation
 - c. Local employment opportunities
- 4) MICHIGAN BENEFITS
 - a. New Manufacturing jobs
 - b. New construction jobs
 - c. New service jobs
 - d. Increase in tax revenues

In order to open the door to these great benefits for Michigan schools and students, four regulatory standards must be in place:

- 1) First, private developers must be able to sell power directly to schools from renewable resource generation located at or near the school site without subjecting the developer and the school to burdensome regulations.
- 2) Second, the schools must be able to receive reasonable credit on their utility bills when the renewable resource power they buy is more than they can use at a given time, and they transmit it to the utility for the utility’s sale to other customers. This is referred to as “net metering.” The 150kW limit for a renewable energy system must be raised to allow renewable resource generation up to the peak electric requirement of the school.
- 3) Third, utilities need to provide standardized, economical interconnection requirements that do not impose undue delays or costs on the schools.

- 4) Fourth, the utility company must be prevented from charging discriminatory or penalizing fees or charges to schools that receive a portion of their power from on-site, renewable energy systems.

The petition requests that certain considerations be afforded to Michigan schools to remove barriers to entry for investment by third party developers. We believe that these changes will result in meaningful economic renewable energy generation and the beneficial spread of renewable energy and environmental educational curricula throughout Michigan schools.

We, along with school representatives, are immediately available to discuss with you and your staff the advancement of immediate legislation and/or MPSC action to promote the essential conditions that will stimulate effective development of these beneficial programs for our schools, taxpayers and Nation's youth.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin Cook". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kevin" and last name "Cook" clearly distinguishable.

Kevin Cook
President, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas Russell". The signature is cursive and elegant, with the first name "Douglas" and last name "Russell" clearly distinguishable.

Douglas Russell
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Naubert". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "William" and last name "Naubert" clearly distinguishable.

William Naubert
Educational Consultant