

HOUSE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING

SB 234 – PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2017

9:00 A.M.

Good morning Chairman Ellis, Chairman Thomas, and members of the House Commerce committee. I am Jim Lauckner, a Sr. Project Consultant to the CCEDC. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of C PACE and SB 234.

CCEDC, the Chester County Economic Development Council, has been supporting companies in and around Chester County for more than 55 years. It has organized 5 Regional Industry Partnerships that have been working with the local Workforce Boards and the PA Department of Labor and Industry. With the state now operating without Silos this has given our IPs the opportunity to work with other departments such as Commerce, Higher Ed, Social Services, PA National Guard and others.

The Smart Energy Initiative, SEI, is an Industry Partnership of Energy related companies. Participating firms come from 8 SE Pa counties (as some years we have firms from as many as 13 counties). From the SEI website

Our Mission

Our mission is to promote the growth of the “smart” energy industry by providing comprehensive workforce and economic development services to partnering companies.

What is “smart energy?”

Smart energy incorporates clean and renewable energies, as well as energy efficiency/conservation and demand-side management products and services.

With more than 10 years of bring firms together to help grow their businesses. There are over 2,100 participates companies. SEI has 4 very active Working Groups consisting of 47 Solar, 25 Geothermal, 75 Energy Efficiency, and has started a new Natural Gas related group with 7 firms so far.

These groups met separately and then jointly on November 1, 2017 and March 22, 2018. While some of these firms compete directly such as geothermal installers, they also compete for the same potential customers Geothermal VS Solar or Combined Heat and Power. Yet, these business leaders come together for the good of the energy industry as well as their individual businesses. Large firms such as Honeywell and Pennoni Associates, and smaller independent businesses such as Brandywine Valley Heating and Air conditioning, as well as large users of energy, such as Longwood Gardens all come together and work to grow the business.

During these particular meetings, common issues such as the need for financing and for marketing were discussed at great lengths. The concept of C PACE was brought up in November and many participants were not yet familiar with the concepts. People in the know such as Steve Krug of Krug Architects, helped to explain and educate the group. Since the bill was in the news, C PACE was discussed again in the March meeting and everyone was in favor of seeing it become law in Pennsylvania. Certainly, private firms have a great interest in promoting their businesses and see this as a tool to help them to do so. The CEO of Independence LED, which manufactures LED Lighting here in PA., support the concept and was asking if there would be any support of the Buy American Act. However, no firm brought any objections up about C PACE.

The firms participating in SEI want to see new and better ways to finance and then inform potential customers about the program and how it applies to the Energy Industry. It was noted that most companies are not in the business of Alternative Energy nor Energy Efficiency, they are consumers of energy. C PACE could be another tool to help firms move forward with Energy projects and pay for them over time, while lowering their energy use and costs.

The Chester County Economic Development Council and the Smart Energy Initiative are in favor of SB 234. SEI companies are willing to help get the message out and help C PACE become a successful program in Pennsylvania.

Thank you for your time.