



Senator Eliot Shapleigh

District 29

El Paso Press Release

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TEXAS SENATE PASSES OMNIBUS SOLAR BILL TO CREATE INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR TEXAS HOMEOWNERS

BILL INCLUDES PROVISIONS BY SENATOR SHAPLEIGH TO ENCOURAGE FUTURE USE OF SOLAR TECHNOLOGY IN TEXAS HOUSEHOLDS

"In Texas, El Paso is literally the Sun City—we are best positioned to develop, market and lead in solar energy. For several years, we have asked El Paso Electric to take much more aggressive steps to lower costs, allow consumers to generate and sell solar power and put El Paso on the map. Changing EPEC from a 1950s power company to a 21st Century energy company must now be a top community priority."

AUSTIN - Today, the Texas Senate passed SB 545, an omnibus solar bill that [includes concepts long advanced by Senator Eliot Shapleigh](#) (D- El Paso) to develop solar energy technology in Texas.

By allowing for investment in solar technology, this measure is a significant step toward creating thousands of solar-related jobs in Texas and could lead to more manufacturing locating in the state.

Among other provisions, SB 545 as amended:

- Creates a distributed solar generation incentive program for residential and business costumers administered by electric utilities;
- Ensures that costumers putting solar or other renewable energy on their property get paid a minimum fair market value should they generate surplus energy;
- Ensures that information about the incentive program and about what buyback rates are offered by retail electric providers is available on the PUC Web site, <http://www.puc.state.tx.us/>, and on customers' bills;

- More -

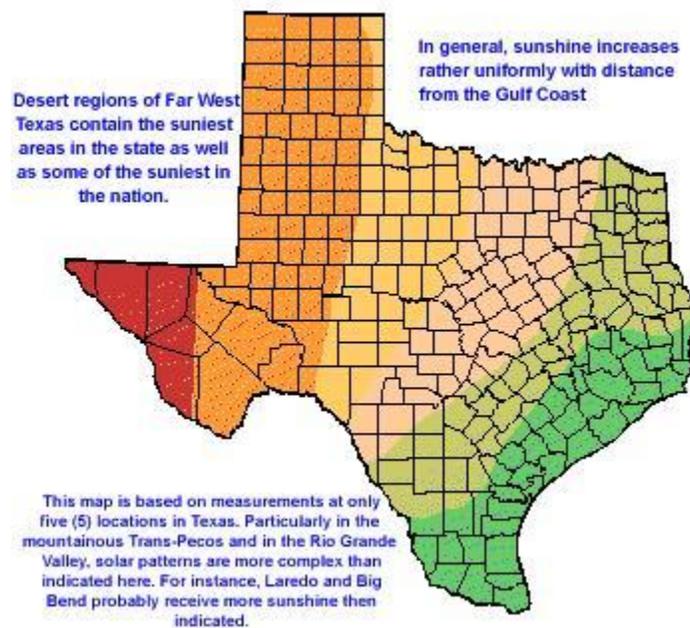
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- Provides net metering policies requiring customers to receive real time market price for exported energy and allows them to obtain other offers from renewable energy producers and clarifies that customers can have third parties install solar energy devices on their home and lease the system;
- Bars residential homeowners associations from imposing arbitrary bans on solar technology on homes;
- Mandates that municipally-owned utilities and electric co-ops would have to report their own efforts to create solar rebate programs;
- Authorizes the State Energy Conservation Office to establish a revolving loan program to help schools install solar energy systems;
- Requires that home builders of new subdivisions with more than 50 homes offer the installation of solar energy devices as an option for new home buyers.

Texas alone receives enough solar energy to supply one and a half times the world's current energy consumption. Today, Texas households pay 56 percent more in monthly energy costs than the national average. Harnessing Texas' natural resources for the production of high efficiency, clean energy will not only help preserve the environment, it will boost the economy and help energy consumers save money.

As the map below illustrates, [El Paso is best suited in Texas for solar energy incentives:](#)



Solar potential in Texas. The map was produced by the Railroad Commission of Texas.

Since the early days of the Sun Carnival, El Paso has been the "Sun city." Now, it's time to move Texas power into the 21st Century and make El Paso a state leader in solar energy generation.

- End -

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