



Senator Eliot Shapleigh

District 29

El Paso Press Advisory

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SENATOR SHAPLEIGH TO HOST PRESS CONFERENCE ON LEGISLATION HE FILED THIS SESSION TO MOVE TEXAS POWER UTILITIES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

"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,"

EL PASO - On Friday, April 10, 2009 at 2 p.m. at Tom Lea Park -Upper in El Paso, Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D-El Paso) will host a **press conference to discuss [a package of bills he has filed this session](#) to increase energy efficiency and modernize Texas power utilities by encouraging greater use of solar energy.**

Harnessing Texas' natural resources for the production of high efficiency, clean energy will both help preserve the environment, boost the economy and help energy consumers save money. [El Paso is perfectly positioned to become the solar capitol of Texas.](#)

At Friday's press conference, Senator Shapleigh will discuss the following bills:

- [SB 211](#), which would require that the Public Utility Commission approve a rate increase for a public energy utility only if the utility can prove it has achieved certain energy efficiency standards;
- [SB 620](#), which would move Texas' renewable energy program forward by increasing the goal for non-wind renewable energy production from 500 megawatts (MW) to 1,500 MW by 2015. The bill would also have the state establish a target of 11,000 MW of installed renewable capacity by January 1, 2025;
- [SB 618](#), which would require all public energy utilities to provide net metering to their customers. Net metering allows utility companies to measure customer-produced electricity, and sets the stage for consumers to sell their excess energy back to the utility company;

- More -

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- [SB 677](#), which would require homebuilders that build or plan to build more than 50 homes in a subdivision to offer installation of solar energy devices for heating, cooling or the production of power;
- [SB 619](#), which would exempt consumers from paying sales tax on solar devices and complement the existing franchise tax exemption for solar and wind energy devices;
- [SB 427](#), which would require electric utilities to create programs to give home owners and home builders a monetary incentive to build integrated solar and geothermal generation at their residences or places of business. The bill would require that electric utilities provide to their customers educational materials on the program; and
- [SB 670](#), which would require that every new state building be certified under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

Attending Friday's press conference will be representatives from the El Paso Solar Energy Association (EPSEA). The association was founded in 1978 and is the oldest, continuously active local solar organization in the United States. EPSEA is a chapter member of the Texas State Solar Energy Society of the American Solar Energy Society.

Also participating will be several UTEP students from the College of Engineering's Civil Engineering Department. These students have participated in extensive research on practical solar technology applications.

What: Senator Shapleigh to host press conference to discuss a package of bills he has filed this session to increase energy efficiency and modernize Texas power utilities by encouraging greater use of solar energy.

When: Friday, April 10, 2009 at 2 p.m.

Where: Tom Lea Park - Upper, 900 Rim Rd. ([Map](#))

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