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Course: PSC 101 1012

Date: May 7th, 2020

Podcast Project

The podcast discusses the development of massive solar arrays across the State of Nevada and how they might affect the development of rooftop solar and how they are pushing the State to move from fossil fuels to renewable energy. The State of Nevada is pushing for the development of alternative sources of power energy, specifically solar energy from both rooftop and utility plants being built. This is aimed at making the State 50 percent dependent on renewable energy by the year 2030. To achieve this, the government is requiring those generating power through rooftop solar to comply with renewable portfolio standards. This is done by connecting the power from the customers' home to the utility through net metering.

In the podcast, the State Senator Chris Brookes explained the difference when it comes to utility-scale projects and rooftop solar projects as one being on the customer's side of the meter while the other is on the utility side of the meter. He also explains the net metering system as one of the changes that have taken place since 2015, which is how the excess energy produced by the rooftop solar is dealt with by crediting consumers with the excess energy produced from their rooftop solar. This value of returned energy was one for one credit, which meant that a consumer would generate a kilowatt-hour of energy. The utility would allow this consumer to consume a kilowatt-hour of energy in the future.

The one for one credit is being reviewed to come up with a better value of solar tariff. This has been replaced with a tiered structure where a certain capacity is installed (80mw), then the value would decline. This would help individuals producing excess rooftop solar energy to get some money back. Martha Tomeczak of Volt solar thinks that it is good that everyone has an opportunity to participate in the economy of clean energy. She agrees that the use of large utility-scale projects is beneficial as they deliver solar energy in large quantities quickly. She, however, points out that there are great benefits to rooftop solar. Since they are local solar projects, consumers can take control of their own energy bills, reduction in the need for costly utility infrastructure upgrades, and the need for power to be moved over long distances to consumers from power plants. The decentralization of energy power supply enables other forms of energy production, such as rooftop solar, to increase the local security and resiliency of power grade. This makes it a critical piece in clean energy contribution as it greatly reduces the emission of greenhouse gases each year. And this energy power supply decision must pass state legislature before put it into work.

Another issue discussed is the current net metering credit rate has benefitted the economy of Nevada through the booming of the solar energy industry. This has created thousands of jobs and improving the State in terms of jobs created through solar energy to be ranked tenth in the United States and the first when it comes to solar jobs per capita. According to Senator Brookes, the Solar energy industry has improved and rebounded to where it was before and had become more sustainable. This had been made possible by passing a legislature by the State of Nevada, where it has allowed every Nevadan to generate and store their electricity as well as being interconnected to the utility grade which is ties to the term I learned in class. This has helped local and major companies to flourish and create thousands of jobs.

However, some people are against putting up large scale solar developments that are done on public land. These people advocate for a distributed generation where they want solar arrays to be put on all parking garages, which would allow for enough energy supply. Nonetheless, Senator Brookes thinks this is unrealistic, and more needs to be done to make any meaningful change towards carbon reduction. Therefore, it is his thoughts that massive solar energy projects, large-scale storage projects, and rooftop projects on a grand scale should be built to electrify the transportation sector and reach the intended climate change goals. The need to electrify the transportation system has also necessitated the need to power them using emission-free electricity. This has led the government of Nevada to start reviewing legislative laws. Therefore, it has been critical for homeowners' participation in clean energy production as it compliments large scale utility power plants.

References

Kyser, Heidi. "Utility-Scale Solar Won't Kill Rooftop, Insiders Say." *Nevada Public Radio*, 13 Sept. 2019, knpr.org/knpr/2019-09/utility-scale-solar-wont-kill-rooftop-insiders-say.