

April 16, 2018



**VIA REGULATIONS.GOV**

Edward Gresser  
Chair, Trade Policy Staff Committee  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

**Re: Solar Safeguard Exclusion Requests**

Dear Mr. Gresser:

SEIA submits this letter to comment generally on the administration's consideration of product exclusion requests. *See* Procedures to Consider Additional Requests for Exclusion of Particular Products from the Solar Products Safeguard Measure, 83 Fed. Reg. 6670 (Feb. 14, 2018).

We agree with the administration's objective of promoting a strong American manufacturing economy. However, although it's too early for demand destruction and job losses to have appeared in official data, SEIA members across the country have been negatively impacted by the tariffs. Specifically, 18 companies have informed SEIA that they will reduce their deployment or workforce in 2018. One company said it was cancelling \$1.5 billion in planned investment, another cut 250 jobs and incurred more than \$20 million in restructuring costs, and a third company cancelled plans to hire hundreds of workers for a number of large-scale projects.

Meanwhile, the domestic manufacturing response to import relief awarded in this case has been underwhelming and does not remotely resemble what the petitioners told the administration to expect. We know of no new company that plans to manufacture CSPV cells in the U.S. Meanwhile, on the international plane, several foreign governments have announced retaliatory measures and commenced legal challenges against the U.S.

The pending product exclusion requests provide an important opportunity to mitigate *unnecessary* elements of harm to the solar industry. Several of the exclusion proposals involve products that are not, and for the foreseeable future will not be, adequately available from American manufacturers. By acting promptly and favorably on those requests, the administration can -- without in any way undermining the policy and remedial intent of the safeguard measure -- help keep America's solar economy driving forward. Doing so will bolster the solar energy sector's contribution to U.S. jobs, national security and economic growth. SEIA is more than willing to help provide opinions from its domestic industry members as to the need for any particular product.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and will remain available to work with the administration on pro-solar, pro-manufacturing, and pro-solar-manufacturing policies.

Respectfully,

Abigail Ross Hopper, Esq.  
President & CEO