



March 29, 2017

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Attorney General of California
1300 I St; Suite 1740
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

Last year, I reached out to inform you about the cutting-edge consumer protection work being done by our team at Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA). We also held a webinar for attorneys general and spoke at two NAAG events on the state of solar markets and consumer protection issues, as well as meeting with several attorneys general offices to discuss our growing markets.

Today, I'm proud to inform you SEIA is releasing a set of *three disclosure forms* intended to make residential solar transactions easier and clearer for consumers. The enclosed disclosures allow consumers to understand key terms of their agreements upfront, easily compare among offers, and ask hard questions of potential solar providers. We understand that for many homeowners, solar is a new choice, and we want to help ensure they understand it fully.

Our industry prides itself on its record of consumer protection and believes that success requires informed consumers who fully understand transactions before entering them. We also believe satisfied consumers are ones who can easily choose among competitors. Today, residential electricity consumers have more choices than ever, and thousands are choosing solar every day. Our industry survives based on satisfied consumers telling family, friends, and neighbors about their experiences, and the numbers show. Last year, after forty years, the country saw the one millionth home solar installation, and the number should reach two million as soon as next year.

As part of our consumer protection initiative, since last year, we've released several new tools for consumers and for solar companies to improve communication and understanding between the two. In the last eighteen months, SEIA developed, in conjunction with over two dozen attorneys, free materials now available on our [consumer protection portal](#). We published the *SEIA Residential Consumer Guide to Solar Power* that gives consumers the tools they need when considering solar. The guide reviews how solar works, homeowner options, questions to ask solar companies, and tips for resolving disputes. A Spanish-version guide is also available free online.

At the heart of SEIA's consumer protection work is the *SEIA Solar Business Code* ("Code"), a national standard of conduct for the industry. All SEIA members agree explicitly to follow and be bound by the Code. The Code is a comprehensive rulebook covering a broad range of state

and federal law and regulations on advertising, marketing & consumer interactions, and contracts. SEIA is working closely with the Better Business Bureau (“BBB”), which has shared the Code with all 114 of its local chapters for education and complaint evaluation purposes.

To give “teeth” to the Code, SEIA established a complaint resolution process which any consumer can use to submit a complaint to SEIA for review and action. If a complaint raises criminal conduct or an issue better handled by a government regulator, SEIA will pass the complaint onto the appropriate state or federal government entity. The SEIA Code and complaint process is meant to supplement government regulation, not supplant it. We continue to work with state and federal offices to make sure consumers experience solar as a success story. We would be more than happy to collaborate with your appropriate state office should a solar-related consumer complaint arise.

Moreover, as you are aware, all fifty states as well as federal agencies maintain consumer protection laws on the books along with contract and tort laws. SEIA believes passionately that bad actors are not welcome in our industry and encourages states to act when necessary.

In conclusion, from our small installers to our board of directors, SEIA is fully committed to consumer protection. Our industry is booming, creating new electricity choices for millions of American homeowners and small business owners while cutting their power bills. Solar now employs 260,000 Americans and growing. It is in our interest to protect the consumer and our efforts prove our commitment.

On behalf of the thousands of workers across the industry, thank you for your leadership in enforcing the law. I’m enclosing several samples of our tools, with more available online. Please feel free to contact me directly at tkimbis@seia.org or 202-469-3737 if there is any issue you wish to discuss, or if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TKimbis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas P. Kimbis
Executive Vice President & General Counsel

SEIA is the national trade association for the solar industry in America. SEIA was founded in 1974 and has approximately 1,000 member companies, all of whom do business in the U.S. and the large majority of whom are small businesses. The solar industry is active in all fifty states and the District of Columbia and employs over 260,000 Americans.