



June 4, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Reid, McConnell, Baucus and Grassley:

The nation remains focused on the need to address urgent economic challenges, including the immediate need to maintain and generate jobs. **America's renewable energy industries have been a source of growth amidst the economic recession and can continue to create well-paying American jobs with your support of a crucial policy: the extension of the Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program (TGP).** As leaders of America's renewable energy trade associations, we urge you to support Senator Maria Cantwell's proposed amendment to extend the Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program as part of the tax extenders bill that is expected to be considered by the Senate this week.

Section 1603 of the ARRA authorizes the Department of Treasury to issue grants to renewable energy facilities that would otherwise qualify for the investment tax credit that start construction in 2009 or 2010. This program has been extremely successful in both deploying renewable energy projects and creating jobs quickly. Two independent studies released in recent months confirm the number of jobs created from the TGP, and project further growth of well-paying American jobs with a 2 year extension of the program.

- The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory report from April 2010 found the TGP created over 55,000 jobs in the wind and geothermal industries alone;
- EuPD Research released a study finding that the TGP supported 17,000 US solar jobs in 2009;
- The same report forecasts the creation of 65,000 additional new jobs by 2015 in the solar and supporting industries across the US should the TGP be extended by two years.

These studies show the TGP has been successful and put tens of thousands of Americans to work. The Cantwell amendment would extend the start construction date to December 31, 2012, similar to provisions in Senator Diane Feinstein's bill, S. 2899, the "Renewable Energy Incentives Act." The enactment of Senator Cantwell's amendment would continue the growth in America's renewable energy industries, creating jobs and clean energy nationwide.

Large utility-scale renewable energy projects can take more than six months to arrange financing. Projects that cannot be certain about meeting the December 31st commence construction date are losing financing now. The certainty of an extension is necessary if we are going to realize all of the renewable energy projects currently in the pipeline.

We thank you for your consideration and ask for your support of the Cantwell amendment to extend and expand the TGP as part of the tax extenders bill.

Sincerely,

Denise A. Bode, Chief Executive Officer
American Wind Energy Association

Karl Gawell, Executive Director
Geothermal Energy Association

Linda Church Ciocci, Executive Director
National Hydropower Association

Rhone Resch, President and CEO
Solar Energy Industries Association