

**RESOLUTION  
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

LARRY WIEDENFELD  
INITIATED BY



JEFFREY S. KUGLITSCH  
DRAFTED BY

LAND CONSERVATION  
COMMITTEE AND  
COUNTY BOARD STAFF  
SUBMITTED BY

SEPTEMBER 26, 2013  
DATE DRAFTED

**SUPPORT OF CLEAN ENERGY CHOICE FOR WISCONSIN**

1           WHEREAS, Rock County has pursued the goal of becoming more sustainable in its planning,  
2 operations, management, and policymaking by implementing numerous projects, initiatives, and policies  
3 that save energy, reduce waste and conserve natural resources while supporting a healthy economy; and,  
4

5           WHEREAS, such recent County initiatives include using a geo thermal heating system at the new  
6 Rock Haven facility which will save the County \$147,000 per year and pay back the cost of the system  
7 within 6 years; and,  
8

9           WHEREAS, Clean Energy Choice will expand market opportunities for Rock County and  
10 Wisconsin companies and their employees who are part of the state's vast renewable energy supply chain  
11 by integrating locally available renewable energy into our economy and by engaging local manufacturers,  
12 distributors, farmers, builders, entrepreneurs, and related professional workers; and,  
13

14           WHEREAS, Rock County urges the State of Wisconsin to adopt a policy expressly allowing  
15 customers to enter into contracts with third parties who install, own, and operate a renewable energy  
16 system at the customer's premises by supporting Clean Energy Choice, which will help households and  
17 businesses overcome the diminishing supply of renewable energy incentive dollars available from  
18 Wisconsin's Focus on Energy program and utilities at no extra cost to ratepayers and taxpayers; and,  
19

20           WHEREAS, current ambiguities in state law make it difficult for customers to access directly  
21 clean renewable energy produced on their premises from systems owned by third parties, and more than  
22 20 states have adopted policies expressly authorizing these types of arrangements with third parties; and,  
23

24           WHEREAS, the businesses, residents, schools and local governments in Rock County desire to  
25 exercise responsibility over their long-term energy choices and integrate clean energy into their daily  
26 lives.  
27

28           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rock County Board of Supervisors in session  
29 this 10 day of October, 2013, that the Rock County Board joins the other Wisconsin citizens,  
30 businesses, and local governments to endorse Clean Energy Choice as a policy for Wisconsin residents.  
31

32           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Rock County Board of Supervisors directs the County  
33 Clerk to send a copy of this resolution to the County's state legislative delegation.

13-10A-427

Respectfully submitted:

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

  
Richard Bostwick, Chair

  
Larry Wiedenfeld, Vice Chair

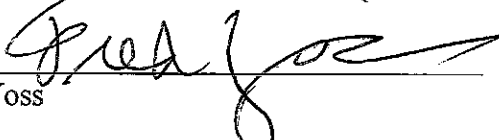
  
Eva Arnold

Absent  
Edwin Nash

  
Norvain Pleasant

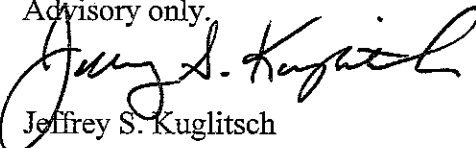
  
James Quade, USDA-FSA Representative

  
Alan Sweeney

  
Fred Yoss

LEGAL NOTE:

Advisory only.

  
Jeffrey S. Kuglitsch  
Corporation Counsel

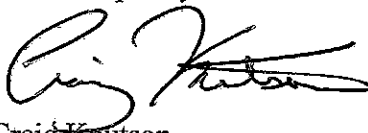
FISCAL NOTE:

No fiscal impact.

  
Sherry Oja  
Finance Director

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Matter of policy.

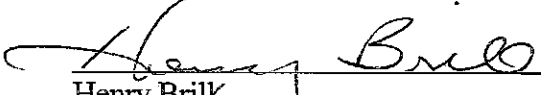
  
Craig Knutson  
County Administrator


COUNTY BOARD STAFF

Absent  
J. Russell Podzilni, Chair

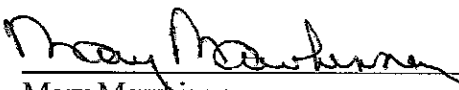
  
Sandra Kraft, Vice Chair

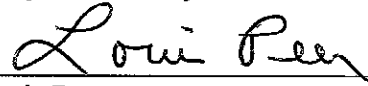
  
Eva Arnold

  
Henry Brill

  
Betty Jo Bussie

Absent  
Marilynn Jensen

  
Mary Mawhinney

  
Louis Peer

  
Kurtis Yankee

## Wisconsin Needs to Approve Clean Energy Choice

The current ambiguities in Wisconsin public utility law interfere with customers' ability to access clean energy produced on their premises. In states where leased solar for electricity is specifically allowed, such as Arizona and Colorado, such arrangements have accounted for up to 90 percent of new installations, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. Such arrangements allow people who don't have several thousand dollars on hand for up-front equipment purchase to have an accessible free market choice about how they obtain electricity. If they want a solar PV system, they can host one without being legally required to spend thousands initially.

But here in Wisconsin, we have a problem. A big utility took legal action in the neighboring state of Iowa to stop Dubuque from buying solar power directly from a company that would own and manage panels on city buildings. And the risk of protracted, expensive legal challenges from utilities so far has deterred third-party solar companies from trying to do business in Wisconsin.

The effect of this ambiguity in Wisconsin is to restrict property rights and citizens' freedom of choice. What is needed is a policy that clarifies one's right to purchase renewable energy produced by equipment located on their premises. To achieve this objective, we are working on a grassroots effort, which we call *Clean Energy Choice*, to embed in state law a citizen's right to access clean energy produced on his or her premises.

- The *Clean Energy Choice* policy would affirm customers' right to decide how they wish to purchase, lease, or implement a renewable energy system for their site.
- Because *Clean Energy Choice* allows third parties to provide the needed up-front capital with a leasing arrangement, this policy will greatly expand the number of energy users who can afford to host solar, wind, or biogas systems serving their homes or businesses. This provides a free choice alternative to the monopoly service that big electric utilities presently provide.
- *Clean Energy Choice* would help households and businesses overcome the diminishing supply of renewable energy incentive dollars available from Wisconsin's Focus on Energy program and utilities **at no extra cost to rate payers and taxpayers.**
- In contrast to standard utility electric service, obtaining directly from a renewable energy system can enable households and businesses to lock in predetermined prices for 10 years or longer. The price of energy from a third-party owned renewable energy system does not increase or decrease as a result of short-term fluctuations in the cost of conventional fossil fuels. **This provides a free market choice.**
- Electricity from a third party-owned system usually flows to the customer directly, offsetting consumption, or it is sold to the utility under an approved tariff. The rate impact from such installations would be negligible.
- *Clean Energy Choice* will greatly expand market opportunities for Wisconsin companies and their employees who are part of the state's renewable energy supply chain. For example, there are an estimated 135 companies in Wisconsin participating in the solar market, including Helios, Ingeteam, and Caleffi, three Milwaukee-based manufacturers.

This resolution encourages the state legislature to adopt a Clean Energy Choice program for Wisconsin.