

DEPCOM POWER – Jim Lamon (CEO)
House Natural Resources Committee Testimony
30 April 2019

I. Thank you, gentlemen and ladies, for this opportunity to speak with you.

I am Jim Lamon – Founder & Chief Executive Officer of DEPCOM Power.

I bring 30 years of experience in engineering and construction of power plants on the US grid; including multi-gigaWatts of coal and gas-fired plants and 8 years of utility solar plants.

I have seen first-hand, the economics that are retiring our coal and nuclear plants and the emergence of gas, wind and solar as low-cost leaders.

Those economics gave me certainty to found DEPCOM Power in 2014. We develop, engineer, construct and operate / maintain utility solar power plants across the US.

We employ 120 American engineers, designers, operations staff and 1,400 construction workers.

Revenue in 2018 (our 5th year of operation) was \$280M, and we continue to grow rapidly, doing so without debt.

We were recently named #1 fastest growing, privately held energy company in the US and 5th fastest overall company.

We are a “Buy American First” company, with 70% of the cost in our plants going to fellow American companies.

As a former U.S. Army Officer, myself, we believe in “Hiring American Veterans First” with 30% (over 500) of our team as veterans.

We believe in giving back, with \$3 Million (10% of our Net Income) this year alone, in charitable contributions to the neediest.

II. I'd like to spend a minute on utility solar power - the same as I recently shared with Sec of Energy Rick Perry, a supporter.

Solar is the low-cost leader for new source generation on our American electrical grid.

Per Lazard Research, an independent research firm, today's costs of new utility generation in America (on an unsubsidized basis) are:

Source (Utility Scale)	Cost (\$/kWhr)
Solar	\$0.04
Wind	\$0.05
Gas	\$0.06
Coal	\$0.11
Nuclear	\$0.18

I support "All of the Above Energy" concept to attain "American Energy Independence". In 2018, 29% of all new U.S. electrical capacity installed came from solar.

After only 10 years since inception, utility solar is powering over 2% of the US grid – and now growing at 0.5% per year.

The solar power industry employs over 240,000 Americans.

III. I'd like to conclude with a discussion to remove the impediments to deploy more, low-cost utility solar power on public lands.

DEPCOM Power has experienced first-hand, the painfully slow federal bureaucracy on public lands in the West. Permits take over twice as long on public land and have significantly more uncertainty, thus limiting the investment of private time and capital.

Development on federal lands brings a daunting variety of additional federal regulations on top of the requirements imposed by the state. There

are layered permitting processes by multiple federal agencies in addition to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

As evidenced by Department of Energy's RAPID tool (a misnomer), there are nearly one hundred additional steps for developing projects on public land than on private land.

I recommend a clear message from Congress to BLM and other Federal agencies to get serious by eliminating steps, setting hard timelines, and to eradicate redundancy in the permitting process. If you really want to get the job done, go solely with the existing, already stringent, state requirements.

If we could achieve a reasonable and predictable process for the use of public land, solar power offers ways to reduce our federal deficit; Here's How:

Solar power plants are designed for 35-year life. The lease payments for land in the West for a typical 100MW plant is \$9,000,000 over that period, which could be going to the US Treasury.

Moreover, at the end of the lease term, the power plant is removed (same as on private land) and returned to its natural condition.

Solar power also offers ways to reduce our trade deficit; Here's How:

The more solar power we produce to meet the US power demand, the more gas and coal we free-up to export thus lowering our trade deficit. Utility solar power can easily provide 30% of the US electrical power demand (up from current 2%), freeing an equal amount of gas and coal for export.

This is not a red or blue issue. Utility solar power is the lowest cost of electrical power for the American rate-payer and a large American job creator, but federal lands won't play much of a part without significant changes in the permitting process. Thank you.