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COMMITTEES:

BUDGET

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

FINANCE

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2805

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Dear SEIA Members:

I want to express my extreme disappointment with your association's recent decision to both endorse a fatally flawed bill and personally alienate several vital supporters of the Solar Investment Tax Credit.

As many of you know, Senator Maria Cantwell and I championed and secured the overwhelming bipartisan passage of key tax extenders in the Senate to encourage the development of solar energy. Solar energy is important to my state of Nevada and to our nation as we reduce our dangerous reliance on Middle Eastern oil.

Breaking through partisan gridlock, we delivered Senate passage of a clean 8-year Solar ITC extension with a vote of 88 – 8. This bipartisan momentum represents the only realistic path to the President's desk, but SEIA advised you to support a doomed House bill (H.R. 6049) that included deeply held objections in my caucus and a veto threat from the White House.

Following a partisan playbook is not a proven or wise track. It is rare to have such overwhelming bipartisan support in today's political climate, but the solar industry had it and your association's leadership squandered it. Decisions by the staff at SEIA caused serious harm to the same industry they are charged with representing. Instead of capitalizing on this opportunity to achieve your goals, SEIA wasted it.

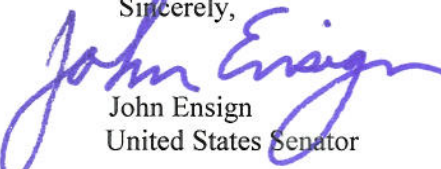
As a result of this short-sighted and blatantly partisan advice, your association alienated many of the key supporters you rely on to meet your goals, making it more difficult to send an 8-year Solar ITC to the President's desk. For the Solar industry, SEIA's political game was a disservice that created more hurdles in Congress and was contrary to your interests.

Moving forward, the solar industry must support realistic opportunities to achieve its objectives. The industry has been tremendously fortunate to have broad bipartisan support for the Solar ITC.

The Solar industry should fight to reclaim the positive bipartisan momentum generated by the Senate passage of the Cantwell-Ensign Clean Energy Tax Stimulus Act as part of the housing bill.

At a time when the House and Senate are deciding how to finalize the housing package, your energy should be directed at making sure that the Clean Energy Tax Stimulus Act remains part of that bill. A professional association focused on results, not politics, would not advise you to do anything else because no progress is made by alienating those who directly support your objectives.

Sincerely,



John Ensign  
United States Senator