



Mount, Gail

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**Clerk's Office
N.C. Utilities Commission**

My name is Ezra Kirbach I have recently installed a grid-tied solar array on my own home under the current net-metering framework.

My investment in rooftop solar on my own home was predicated on the assumption that I could earn full compensation for my excess generation through net-metering. Changing the rules after the fact will drastically change the payback I had counted on for my investment, and creates an uncertain marketplace for everyone which will reduce further installations and harm the solar industry. Also changing the net-metering rules could result in a new permit process and changing the way my solar panels are installed. This would result in a lot of unexpected work for me and would likely incur additional costs. Keeping the net-metering rules the same will ensure that I don't need complete any excess work on my solar panels.

Finally, I contend that the rationale for cutting payments to residential rooftop solar producers is misguided. Residential rooftop solar customers have made investments in solar generation because they demand renewable energy, a demand not currently being supplied by our regulated utilities. Their investment provides the benefit of clean electricity to the grid, and yet that investment does not raise cost for non-solar ratepayers. Studies in California have found that distributed generation actually *lowers* costs for other ratepayers, because it allows the power company to avoid the high capital costs of constructing additional generation facilities. Critically, it also helps taxpayers avoid the environmental and public health costs associated with new coal or fossil-fuel generation. North Carolina is currently a leader in renewable energy policy—let's keep it that way. By upholding the current net-metering pay structure, you ensure that renewable technologies will continue to grow in this state and that our citizens ultimately pay less for energy production.

Ezra Kirbach