



California Energy Commission <b>DOCKETED</b> <b>12-EPIC-01</b>
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**California Energy Commission**

1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: PI Energy Comments to Epic Investment Plan:

The current funding climate for pre-commercial solar energy technologies from government and private venture sources has virtually dried up. This has created a gap in funding that has prevented potentially promising new technologies from getting to market. California's economy has been driven by innovation. This innovation requires investment in future products.

The EPIC program would provide a very important bridge between research on new energy technologies and commercial deployment. California has been a leading force in technology innovation, particularly in renewable energy. The benefits to California leadership in renewable energy include, jobs (= more tax revenue), greater energy independence, cleaner air and sustainable sources of energy. Building hardware and new technology deployment requires capital investment to show validation. Small companies without large capital resources are major sources of innovation and the ones least able to obtain the funding required to move a prototype out of the lab and into a demonstrable product. New innovative products require proof of principle to move to commercialization.

The Program Administrator should focus on the benefits of the innovation if it succeeds. Frequently funding decisions are made based on the availability of a metric and not the overall potential impact of the innovation.

EPIC should focus a portion of its budget to new solar technologies. Solar energy installations have been growing at 20% per year while a large portion of the solar energy hardware manufacturing has gone overseas. The focus of research funding should be on technologies that can bring manufacturing back to California based on cost competitiveness

Our company is small California based solar energy technology company. We have directly experienced this funding gap. It is real and is a significant barrier to commercialization. The EPIC program would help enable us to bring a potentially game changing technology to market.