

TSPA Testimony on SB 398 (Menendez) – 3/30/21
Senate B&C: DG consumer protection

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members. My name is Charlie Hemmeline, executive director of the Texas Solar Power Association, testifying FOR SB 398

THE TEXAS SOLAR POWER ASSOCIATION is the statewide trade association for the solar industry in Texas. Our membership includes manufacturers, large-scale power plant developers, residential and commercial rooftop integrators, and others across the full solar supply chain. Collectively, our industry employs over 13,000 Texans.

The cost of solar power has dropped significantly over the past several years, and customers all across Texas are increasingly looking to rooftop systems as a way to improve their self-sufficiency and reduce their utility bills.

What this bill does is take some basic sensible steps to make sure customers can move forward with that investment if they so choose.

- It prevents municipal governments from imposing city-wide bans on solar
- It entitles a customer to certain disclosures from their solar system provider so it's clear what they're getting

I also wanted to point out some of the existing solar practices that this bill would not change:

- Cities can continue to issue permits for installation, to collect fees for those permits, and to conduct inspections to ensure compliance with appropriate building and electrical codes.
- They can also maintain reasonable aesthetic requirements, such as making solar panels be installed flat on the roof plane and not extend higher than the roofline.

This is a common-sense bill that empowers customers in their efforts to self-generate with solar power. We're in strong support of the legislation and we appreciate Senator Menendez and his staff for their hard work on it.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and I'm happy to answer any questions.