

Clean Energy and Land Use from a County Commissioner's Viewpoint



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Land Use / Renewables as Commissioner

Commissioners need to approach renewable energy projects with a Balanced Perspective:

- Environmental
 - Economic
- Community Factors

Energy Project Ordinance

- **Location - NIMBY concerns (Not in my Back Yard)**
- **Setbacks, security fencing, buffers etc.**
- **Solar panel & wind turbine heights**
- **Decommissioning & Financial Assurances**
- **Electrical Safety / Power transmission lines**
- **Pesticide use / Water Quality**
- **Inspections / Notifications etc.**

This helps developers to know up front what the requirements are.

Prepare, Promote, and Protect Workforce

Work with your Community Colleges

- **Planning for a large energy project / encourage them to teach student the skills they need to qualify for the anticipated construction and long-term Maintenance jobs.**
- **Investigate the company workers' complaints before approving the project. There are always bad actors / leaving town before paying local workers**

Why a New State Law – Decommissioning

How it relates to Commissioners

A February 2021 report by the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Laboratories estimated that the cost of decommissioning solar is:

- **\$300,000 /kW if the panels can be repurposed or sold.**
- **\$340,000 /kW if the panels are disposed of in a lined landfill.**
- **\$440,000 /kW if the panels are recycled.**

Based on NREL's Decommissioning costs for the 8,000 megawatts of solar panels we know are installed in North Carolina are expected to range from \$2.4 billion to \$3.5 billion. That is a huge liability for the state. Our fear is that much of these costs will fall on taxpayers.

North Carolina: House Bill 130 Decommission

- Creates a decommissioning requirement within a year following the cessation of a solar panel's use.
- The panel must be disconnected from the grid and equipment must be removed. The property must be restored to its previous condition.
- Prior to the construction of a utility-scale solar project, a decommissioning plan must be sent in to DEQ with the application for that project.
- Plan includes a cost estimate for decommissioning and the steps necessary to restore the property.
- Plan must include a proposed mechanism to satisfy financial assurance requirements.
- Owner of the project must provide financial assurance regarding sufficient funds to restore the property. Must be established more than 5 years out from the project's expected service life ends.
- Authorizes DEQ to collect fees at time of registration and periodic updates.
- Authorizes DEQ to identify federal grant programs that encourage the recycling of solar panels.
- Asks the public staff to identify existing projects and their associated decommissioning costs.
- Authorizes local governments to establish and implement requirements that are more stringent than those set forth in bill for decommissioning and financial assurance for utility-scale solar projects located within their jurisdictions.
- Allows lease agreements for property on which a utility-scale solar project will be sited to include more stringent requirements than those set forth in the bill.

Contact Information



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