

# General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1236

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING SOLAR LICENSING EXEMPTIONS.

**Vote Date:** 3/24/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/14/2025

**File No.:**

**Disclaimer:** *The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## SPONSORS OF BILL:

General Law Committee

## REASONS FOR BILL:

Public Act No. 7-242 exempted solar employees from needing a license to perform certain solar panel installation tasks like mounting racking systems. The proposed legislation looks to close these exemption loopholes by mandating that anyone performing these types of jobs be required to have an electrical license or be an electrical apprentice. The goal of this legislation is twofold. First, it intends to make solar panel installations safer by ensuring only individuals with the proper experience are performing potentially dangerous electrical work. It also encourages individuals to pursue licensure for skilled trades, specifically electrical licenses, which would expand Connecticut's skilled workforce.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

### [Aziz Dehkan, Executive Director, CRCJ, Supports:](#)

Aziz Dehkan is submitting testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs (CRCJ) in support of the proposed legislation. CRCJ notes that clean energy demand is expected to grow by twelve percent. CRCJ argues the passage of this bill will help facilitate this trend by encouraging workers to enter skilled trades. Under the current system, solar companies prioritize temporary, unlicensed work, which may discourage individuals from entering the skilled trades. Ultimately, this bill helps to promote safety and the long-term sustainability of the solar industry.

**Anthony Cavalli & Jerome White, IBEW 488**

Anthony Cavalli & Jerome White expresses their strong concern for the current exemption that allows solar employees to conduct certain work without an electrical license. They argue that this exemption creates a double standard and devalues the integrity of the license by allowing non-licensed individuals to do certain types of electrical work. They also note that the passage of the current legislation would have a positive effect on the industry by offering a pipeline for workers to gain this valuable electrical license and for consumers to feel assured that any work is conducted safely by those with the proper credentials. The passage of this bill would put Connecticut in line with national industry best practices.

**Paul Costello, IBEW Local 90, Supports:**

Paul Costello supports SB 1236 because it clarifies vague language from previous regulations; this bill will clearly define what is covered under the exemption and what type of work is not covered. He explains some of these differences and includes pictures in the addendum to give further clarity. Costello is primarily concerned about safety, noting that current regulations increase the risk of catastrophic incidents like electrical fires. This bill provides protection to consumers by ensuring those risks are mitigated and puts Connecticut in line with national industry best practices.

**Bill Finch, Director, Connecticut Labor Management Cooperation Committee, Support:**

Bill Finch is testifying in support of this bill, noting that solar panel work clearly falls under the scope of what Connecticut defines as electrical work. Finch notes his regrets as a former legislator for not catching the exemption when the original legislation was passed in 2007; however, he is hopeful that the passage of this bill would make the clarifications that were not in the original legislation. Moreover, he notes the confusion in the original bill often leads to individuals not pursuing certain types of licenses, even when these licenses can be beneficial to the individual getting them and to the Connecticut Green Energy Community more holistically. Finch includes photographs of solar panel fires to emphasize the danger improper installation can cause.

**Ed Hawthorne, President, Connecticut AFL-CIO, Supports:**

Ed Hawthorne is testifying on behalf of the AFL-CIO in support of the proposed legislation. The AFL-CIO notes that the skilled trades, like electrical work, introduce thousands of quality middle-class jobs into Connecticut. This bill would encourage more individuals to get licensed in these types of careers. Furthermore, the bill is necessary to promote safety. AFL-CIO notes that when the original regulations were passed in 2007, it was not possible to foresee the industry's future growth. Therefore, the exemption must be revisited. Moreover, AFL-CIO argues this law would not go into effect until October 2026, giving the industry plenty of time to enroll their workers into an electrical apprenticeship program.

**Kimberly Glassman, Director, Foundation for Fair Contracting of Connecticut, Inc., Supports**

Kimberly Glassman is representing the Foundation for Fair Contracting of Connecticut, which is testifying in support of this bill. The passage of this bill would provide a valuable pipeline for workers to acquire skilled trade licenses which offer great benefits for those who receive them. Furthermore, this bill clarifies types of roles that non-electrical workers can have on a job site. Overall, this bill would provide Connecticut with a better work force that is more skilled and works under safer conditions.

**International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers:**

The International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers listed below testified in support of SB 1236. They believe this bill will help to clarify the existing regulations from 2007 and encourage more individuals to become electricians. This bill could help grow the skilled workforce in Connecticut, which would benefit both the state and the individuals earning these licenses.

**Steve Carney, Executive Vice President, International Bricklayers & Allied Crafts, Supports**

**Gerald Marotti, President, International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers**

**Michael Nealy, Business Manager & Financial Secretary, IBEW 35, Supports:**

Michael Nealy supports this bill due to its focus on enhancing safety and clearly defining what types of roles that electricians have compared to other workers on site during solar installations. He notes IBEW 35's excellent electrical license training program. He states that IBEW 35 and its members are not out to impede the progress of Connecticut going green, but rather looking to support it by providing skilled experience to these industries.

**Joe Toner, Executive Director, State Building Trades, Supports:**

Joe Toner is testifying on behalf of the Connecticut State Building Trades Council (CSBTC) in support of this proposed legislation. CSBTC argues that the legislation is needed to clarify questions that exist regarding existing language. CSBTC notes this bill clarifies an electrician's role in these types of installations and what work can be done by other staff on site.

**Eighty-eight IBEW members and apprentices** presented nearly identical testimony in favor of the proposed legislation. They are concerned that current state statutes permit individuals to install solar panels without proper electrical licensure. These individuals argue that this loophole should be closed because it devalues the integrity of the license and compromises industry standards.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:****C-Ward Energy, Opposes:**

The C Ward employees listed below testified against the proposed legislation. They argue that it would disrupt Connecticut's mission to "achieve a zero-carbon electric grid by 2040." Furthermore, they believe that requiring all installers on site to be licensed electricians or electrical apprentices is unnecessary. They argue that instead of making installations safer, this bill would cost solar employees their jobs and result in extra costs to the consumer.

**Taylor Botteron, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**Kevin Hampton, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**Craig Hendel, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**David Harrison, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**Angel Laboy, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**Wilbur Parsell, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**Cristian Rivera, Solar Installer, C Ward Electric**

**Patrick Perrigo, Electrical Apprentice, C Ward Electric**

**Christopher Ward, Owner, C Ward Electric**

**Thirty-six Earthlight Technologies employees** submitted nearly identical testimony expressing their opposition to the proposed legislation. They state that during each typical installation “a licensed electrician, an apprentice, and several roof installers” are on site. The employees argue that the new mandate that only an electrician or apprentice mount panels will lead to overqualified installers. They compare the electrical work required in this portion of the installation to plugging in Christmas lights. They think that Connecticut would be sacrificing current and future jobs while raising the cost of solar panel installation.

**Eric Dornfeld, President, Green Power Energy, Opposes:**

Eric Dornfeld is testifying against this bill via his role as President of Green Power Energy. He argues that this bill is unnecessary since a licensed electrician must be on site anyway and municipalities already inspect each project. By passing this bill, hundreds of jobs would be at risks due to workers not qualifying to perform installations, and current projects would have to be delayed.

**Greentech Renewables, Opposes**

The Greentech Renewables employees listed below testified against the proposed legislation. They believe it is unnecessary and will cause negative externalities to the industry and the consumer. The employees argue this legislation would disrupt Connecticut’s Green energy plans, make consumers that are already mad about increased electric rates even more upset, and cost many solar employees their jobs due to the overly-specific requirements being put into place.

**Alexander Marroquin, Business Development, Greentech Renewables**

**Eric Prantis, Sales Manager, Greentech Renewables**

**Joshua Jackson CEO & Founder, Everlast Energy, Opposes:**

Joshua Jackson of Everlast Energy testified in opposition to this bill on behalf of Everlast Energy. Everlast Energy argues that it would be unwise to pay the entire staff the wage of a licensed electrician and would make hiring adequate levels of professional staff unaffordable. They think this legislation would put many solar installers out of work at a time when Connecticut is aggressively pursuing green energy initiatives. Mr. Jackson argues that the licensed electrician that is already on site should be properly equipped to handle all safety concerns, so there is no need for each member on site to have an electrical license or be an apprentice.

**Jackie Litynski, Energy and Policy Analyst, Sunnova, Opposes:**

Jackie Litynski is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation via her position as an Energy Policy and Data Analyst for Sunnova Energy. Litynski lists the existing standards for solar installation, which she notes are already sufficiently high. She agrees that electricians should be the ones involved in “interconnection work associated with a residential solar system.” However, she points out that this bill wants to mandate electricians to perform non-electrical work, which she characterizes as unnecessary and cost prohibitive for solar companies and customers.

**Pure Point Energy, Opposes:**

The Pure Point Energy employees listed below spoke in opposition to the proposed bill. They believe the bill will not actually increase safety standards. They note the current system allows solar installers to work alongside more experienced folks to learn from them. They

believe that safety is paramount, but the existing regulations, established in 2007, already cover these concerns.

[Chris Lobdell, Pure Point Energy](#)

[Donna Pierre, Office Manager, Pure Point, Energy](#)

[Tom Wemyss, CEO, Pure Point Energy](#)

**Steven Salansky, CEO, SAVAKT, Opposes:**

Steven Salansky via his position as CEO of SAVAKT is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation. Salansky notes there is a distinct difference between electrical work and installation of solar panels. He points to the fact that trained roofers have been able to successfully complete these installations for almost twenty years without the need for an electrical license. In addition to being unnecessary, he thinks this bill would increase the cost for solar companies to hire installers, which would increase the cost of installation for the consumer. Moreover, Salansky contends that solar installers would leave the state in search of states with less stringent regulations.

**Solar Ship, Opposes:**

Ten individuals affiliated with Solar Ship testified in opposition to the proposed legislation. Many of these individuals believe that the existing regulatory framework is sufficient. They think that this legislation proposes would increase cost and be administratively burdensome for companies. Some testifiers emphasize how solar panel installation has gotten twenty percent cheaper and saved consumers money..

[Jared Clairmont, Solar Professional](#)

[Andres Espinosa, Area Canvasser](#)

[Daniel Giskin, Director of Operations](#)

[Joshua Kekac, CEO & Founder](#)

[Sam Jenkins, Project Manager](#)

[Joel Mastrobattisto, Assistant District Manager](#)

[Johhny Murph, Solar Canvassing Manager](#)

[Kevin Murrihy, Events Coordinator](#)

[Kyle Myers, Area Canvasser](#)

[Greg Plaskett, Solar Professional](#)

**Solar Solutions, Opposes:**

The two Solar Solutions employees listed below testified in opposition to the proposed legislation. In their experience, electricians are hesitant to work on the roof considering “all the electrical work is near the main electric panel and on the ground.” Due to this reality and the added price to consumers, the proposed legislation, if passed, would make it more difficult to stay in business.

**Robert Schwartz**

[Damon Weiss](#)

**Sun Wind Solutions, Opposes:**

The two Sun-Wind Solutions LLC affiliates listed below testified in opposition to the proposed legislation. Dortenzio notes that Connecticut already has regulations and inspections governing the solar industry and characterizes these as sufficient. Both testifiers think that this bill would not have a benefit to the consumer and would force solar companies to hire electricians for non-electrical work.

[Bob Dortenzio, Owner](#)

**Sebastian Giglio, Senior Installer**

**Mike Trahan, Executive Director, CT Solar, Opposes:**

Mike Trahan, on behalf of the Connecticut Solar and Storage Association, is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation. Trahan notes the success of the current system, therefore, arguing this change is unnecessary. Furthermore, this bill would force solar companies to hire more apprentices, which would simultaneously require them to hire more electricians to keep in line with the state mandated ratio. Trahan asserts that this is mathematically impossible.

**Trinity Solar, Opposes:**

Two Trinity Solar employees testified in opposition to the proposed legislation. They are already concerned about the labor shortage in the industry and worry that this legislation would exacerbate the issue. They think the current system is safe and note that there is already a strict division of labor.

**Chelsea Farrell, Policy Associate, Trinity Solar**  
**Paul Lamoreux, E1 License Holder, Trinity Solar**

**Erinn Triplett, Director of Operations, Omega Energy, Opposes:**

Erinn Triplett is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation on behalf of Omega Energy. Omega Energy argues that Connecticut needs solar to become more accessible whereas this bill would make it less so. They think bill would put more stress on electricians and increase instability in the electricity market.

**Kyle Wallace, Vice President of Public Policy, Posi Gen, Opposes:**

Kyle Wallace is testifying in opposition to this bill on behalf of PosiGen. PosiGen notes that this bill is essentially asking electricians to complete non-electrical work. They argue that the current system has been in place for roughly fifteen years with no sign of safety issues, meaning a change is unnecessary. They think this bill would increase costs to consumers, burden electricians who already have a lot of other tasks to complete in the installation process, and increase the time it takes to complete these installations.

**Nine members of the public** expressed general opposition to the legislation.

**Reported by: Derrick Arnold**

**Date: March 25, 2025**