



Support HB 874: Solar Power Free Market Financing and Property Rights Act

It's time for a free market approach to private solar financing that puts Georgians in charge of their energy options. **Georgia Watch supports HB 874 because it would clear the way for Georgians to choose solar energy and choose the financing option that makes that energy investment the most affordable.**

Many American homes, businesses, churches and schools that go solar currently choose to do so through financing options that remove upfront costs and help lower power bills. In Georgia, we have outdated laws that prevent consumers from taking advantage of these same options and are propping up monopoly utilities at the expense of competition and customer choice. **HB 874 would benefit all Georgia consumers by:**

- 1) **Saving ratepayers money on their energy bills.** Private investment in rooftop solar reduces the need for utilities to build expensive traditional power plants and transmission infrastructure, which can help keep rates low for all Georgians. This bill will clear the way for this cost-saving private investment in our energy infrastructure on your property.
- 2) **Spurring economic development and job growth.** Solar energy keeps energy dollars invested or spent here at home, in our own communities. Putting solar on rooftops creates local construction jobs that cannot ever be outsourced. Nationally, solar job growth has significantly outpaced the general economy. This bill will jumpstart the Georgia solar industry, attract investment from national and international companies, and create thousands of new local jobs, which is essential as Georgia still recovers from a record recession.
- 3) **Opening the free market for energy choice.** Georgia's electric power market is dominated by a monopoly utility that has not changed its business model in a century. Our economy thrives on energy innovation, competition and choice which all reduce electricity costs. This bill will put Georgians in charge of their energy options and clear the way for innovative solar companies to meet that changing customer demand while lowering the cost of electricity for us all.
- 4) **Creating healthier communities.** Private solar investment reduces harmful emissions from traditional power plants that can increase healthcare costs especially for children and seniors. Georgians deserve clean air to breathe and clean water to drink. Solar investment also helps preserve our water resources by reducing the amount of water that regulated utilities use for steam and cooling of their massive power plants.