



April 26, 2007
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SOLAR TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS THAT AIM TO MAKE SAN FRANCISCO THE NATION'S LEADING SOLAR CITY

SAN FRANCISCO— The San Francisco Solar Task Force, co-chaired by Assessor-Recorder Phil Ting and solar policy expert David Hochschild, announced several groundbreaking recommendations today to encourage local homeowners to install solar energy systems, and to make the installation easier and more cost-efficient. The recommendations, which aim to increase the number of solar-powered homes in the City to 10,000 by the year 2010, include streamlining the solar permitting process, introducing a local ordinance to preserve access to sunlight, proposing financial incentives for homeowners, as well as continuing to increase public awareness about the benefits of installing rooftop solar panels.

“In the spirit of Earth Week, I am proud to be a part of this groundbreaking effort to expand solar usage among San Francisco residents and help make San Francisco the nation’s greenest city,” stated Phil Ting. Progress in solar installation has been slow in San Francisco where we have only 500 solar installations out of a total of 190,000 parcels. Part of the problem San Franciscans face are installation costs; state and federal rebates cover an average of \$7,000 per installation, often leaving the customer with between \$12,000 to \$15,000 in expenses. Homeowners also face a complicated and drawn-out local permitting process that in some cases is so burdensome that solar installation companies have left town to do business in other cities in the Bay Area that have more expedited permitting processes. As an example, it is on average \$2,000 cheaper to install solar panels in San Rafael than in San Francisco.

“San Francisco voters have spoken clearly and loudly on the issue of solar energy and they deserve policies that will help deliver real results,” said David Hochschild, a solar policy expert and co-chair of the Task Force. “By adopting best practices to promote solar energy, San Francisco can become the national model and help lead the way from the polluting energy sources of the 20th Century to the clean energy sources of the 21st Century.”

The Solar Task Force initiatives will facilitate solar installation for city residents in three ways:

- Work with the City and County to streamline the solar permitting process;
- Work with the City and County to pass a “solar access law” that would protect the sunlight necessary for rooftop solar panels;
- Seek \$50 million in local funding to provide rebates to property owners who install solar energy systems, providing a local rebate (on top of state and federal rebates) of \$5,000-\$6,000 to each household that goes solar;
- Increase public awareness around the benefits of going solar.

The Solar Task Force consists of representatives of industry, labor, government, environmental advocacy and the community. The group continues to meet and will release further details on its three-pronged approach to expanding solar energy usage in San Francisco in the next month. For further information on going solar in San Francisco or California, go to www.solarsf.org, www.findsolar.com, or www.gosolarcalifornia.com.

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