



Solar: The Future King of Renewables?

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Topic

Installed solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity in the United States continues to be dwarfed by wind generating capacity. In fact, solar lags behind all other established forms of renewable power generation, including biomass, hydroelectric and geothermal power. However, current circumstances suggest that our most ubiquitous resource may be about to come into its own in the renewable energy arena.

Among other things, the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 extended the 30% solar investment tax credit (ITC) for eight years for both residential and commercial solar installations (i.e., through December 31, 2016), eliminated the \$2,000 cap on the investment tax credit for residential solar electric installations placed into service after 2008, and made public utilities eligible to claim the tax credits. Critically, the costs of PV technology (on a per kWh generated basis) continues to rapidly decline. One analyst suggested in 2009 that the day had arrived where PV installations had reached grid parity and could now produce electricity as cheaply as traditional competitive generation sources, while others forecast that occurrence by 2015. In any event, PV module production continues to grow exponentially, with more manufacturing capacity expected to be announced.

Yet, much continues to stand in the way of PVs becoming a leading source of electric energy in the U.S. Beyond the difficulty of accessing capital as our economy struggles to recover, the solar PV industry is still not working under a mature set of policies, regulations, local ordinances and commercial arrangements ? all of which are needed for PV generation to become a substantial portion of the nation's generation portfolio. Please join us for a lively and provocative discussion concerning the issues that will dictate the future of PV generation in the United States.

This program addressed:

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- Robert F. Riley ? 202.293.8121 ? rriley@williamsmullen.com

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