

# Do incentives help or merely shift the wealth

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**I**ncentives for renewable energy, are they good or are they just another means for the government to shift the wealth? Oops opened a can of worms. What are the pros and cons?

The good first then we will get to the bad and then the ugly. Any Utility that puts a net metering policy into place is doing a very honorable thing.

Hurricane has got a new policy. To clarify a few points, the limit on area is for ground mount only. The limit on the size is ten kilowatt and that is because Hurricane's grid is limited. Leonard Dunkovich was one of the people involved with putting the policy together. It takes a lot of time and effort to get these policies into place.

A round of applause is in order. He said one of the points of Hurricane's policy that differs is they credit full retail price on the energy you feed back into the grid. It is great that not only Hurricane, but also Washington and St George are making investments into alternative energy.

Without investment into new technologies where would nuclear be now. Without the investment we would have never made it to the moon. The investment for going to space is what moved the development of solar to a viable product. It's what made it possible to have a space station. If the solar industry could have government and private investment for ten years it would stand on its own.

Look at Japan. Why do you think most of the panels made today are Japanese? Japan had some great incentives to move the industry forward. As the market became established Japan trimmed the incentives back. Germany is another. Germany currently produces ten percent of the energy they use with renewable energy. Germany's goal is to be off of nuclear power by the year 2025.



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The oil industry has had subsidies. Grants from the US department of Agriculture to develop biodiesel made it possible to come up with new technology. The list goes on and on.

Policy is a critical aspect to a secure and stable market. Look at New Jersey. The carpet was pulled out from under the market and it fell. Unchanging policies and a commitment to investment is what the solar and wind industries need from government and the private sector.

If there are only a few years to make investments, most big investors will shy away. It will take decades to pay for the investment in infrastructure to meet future demand. Companies and investors need to have the confidence that policies will hold fast even with administration changes.

Now for the bad. There are arguments to go lower. Government incentive programs for adopting alternative energy are totally corrupt. It commandeers the wealth of America. Taking from the wealthy and giving to the poor. Tally Ho. Incentives do not work and create a crutch for the industry. Government should help nor hinder any industry as long as it does not infringe on the public welfare. In the old Republic this thinking would win many an argument. Not yours to give.

Some say global warming is nothing more than a hoax. The government action should only be justified by a scientifically verifiable fact proven in a court of law. That burning carbon

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fuels will do demonstrable harm to specific individuals through some sort of catastrophic change in weather.

Even the United Nation projects an eight degree average warming over the next 100 years could be dealt with ample time to migrate if necessary.

Now the ugly. Do we do nothing and let the roll of the dice decide our fates or do we take action.

Apathy is one of the ugliest things ever unleashed on a society.

It makes little problems into monstrous tribulations.

As a sore festers and the infection spreads the loss of limbs and life, not only may but will happen.

The prognosis is "Just Shoot Me" the problem is just too big. Apathy is death to inquisitiveness into possibilities.

In the final analysis without government incentives, strong enduring policies, grants and loan guarantees the solar indus-

try would have never made it to where it is today.

If we do not invest and put policies in to place for renewable energy, it will not make any significant difference in the future. We need strong policies and investment to change where we get our energy.

As Governor Bill Richardson said when talking about weaning ourselves off our oil addiction bridging this "valley of death" is essential to our energy future. It makes good sense to have a Zero-Net-Energy home and work place.

The financial aspect is a small consideration when mounted against global warming, a distressed world, destabilized energy bills and that disease (dis-ease) of apathy.

Be a Maverick.

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