

Solar Energy Industries Association

PRESS RELEASE

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Solar Energy Industries Association Names U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander, New Jersey BPU President Jeanne Fox, Arizona Corporation Commissioner Kris Mayes as Solar Energy Champions of the Year

(Washington, DC) – The Solar Energy Industries Association announced today that U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), New Jersey Board of Public Utilities President Jeanne Fox, and Arizona Corporation Commissioner Kris Mayes are the winners of its 2005 Solar Energy Champion Awards.

The awards were announced at Solar Power 2005, an annual event hosted jointly by SEIA and the Solar Electric Power Association.

“These leaders have done more to advance solar energy from their positions than any other in the country,” said Rhone Resch, president of SEIA.

Senator Alexander received the first federal solar champion award ever given by SEIA. As Chairman of the Energy Subcommittee of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Alexander has tackled some of the most critical energy issues that the US currently faces. In 2005, Senator Alexander introduced, and worked hard to pass, the strongest solar incentives in 20 years. First in the Natural Gas Price Reduction Act of 2005, and then in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Senator Alexander introduced a 30%, 6- year tax credit for both commercial and residential solar installations. SEIA estimates that these provisions would have created over 20,000 new manufacturing and installation jobs in the U.S. (as many as 1,000 in Tennessee alone). Perhaps more importantly, these provisions would have saved consumers over \$12 billion dollars in natural gas and electricity costs. Sadly, these provisions were reduced in size and duration during the energy bill mark up. Yet, in the end, solar energy received the strongest federal incentives in 20 years, due almost entirely to the efforts of Senator Alexander and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

“Solar energy is a clean, renewable energy resource that is abundant throughout the United States,” Sen. Alexander said. “The new tax credits help make solar power more affordable. Now consumers can help the U.S. take a small, but important, step towards energy independence while at the same time helping us breathe cleaner air.”

Since becoming president of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities in 2002, President Fox has transformed New Jersey into a national leader in solar and energy efficiency. She has managed the creation of an RPS with a specific solar carve-out of approximately 90 MW by 2009, and set in place a powerful incentive program to support it. In addition, she established the nation's best net metering and interconnection rules that allow fair and simple access of solar energy into the market, and set up the nation's most active solar REC trading program. These efforts resulted in a boom in the state's solar industry, which has experienced a 550% growth rate in the last three years and created hundreds of new jobs and millions of kilowatt hours per year of clean and reliable solar energy. Proceedings are now underway to extend the RPS to 2020 and to establish a solar goal of 1,500 MWs. Additionally, her leadership has created a model framework for distributed generation that the industry holds up as a model for other states to adopt.

"I am proud to accept this award as a reflection of the excellent work of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities and the Clean Energy Council, who have worked with me to establish the programs and policies that have made New Jersey one of the fastest growing markets for solar energy" said President Fox. "We hope New Jersey will serve as a model for the nation and for other states to follow because our continued growth and success will ultimately be tied to their success and the establishment of a vibrant national market for solar energy."

Commissioner Mayes was appointed to the Arizona Corporation in 2003 and became the most effective new advocate for solar in Arizona. She single-handedly helped put distributed solar power on the map in Arizona, and is now driving a process within the Commission to revise the EPS. When completed, this standard could result in 500-1000 MW of distributed resources being deployed in Arizona over the next 20 years. In addition, Commissioner Mayes has worked with utilities in the state to expand funding for their PV programs. Through her continued efforts and the efforts of her fellow commissioners, she is developing a significant market for distributed solar technologies, while providing opportunities for CSP in Arizona as well.

"It is an honor for me to accept this prestigious award and I am deeply grateful to be included in a group with Sen. Alexander and Commissioner Fox," said Commissioner Mayes. "This award recognizes and celebrates the efforts of people who share my view that we are in the midst of a renewable energy revolution in this country and that there is no better way to see that revolution through than by fostering a marketplace for distributed solar technologies. My hope is that Arizona will be at the forefront of those efforts."

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SEIA is the national trade association of solar energy manufacturers, dealers, distributors, contractors, installers, architects, consultants and marketers. Established in 1975, SEIA works to expand the use of solar technologies in the global marketplace.