

August 18, 2018

Dear Friends:

I am sorry my schedule does not allow me to join you at this year's SolarFest, but I want to congratulate you for coming together to help build a clean energy future.

To my mind, climate change is the single greatest threat facing our planet. We are already seeing the devastating effects of global warming, from more severe storms, droughts, flooding, wildfires, rising sea levels and more. Virtually the entire scientific community agrees that human activity is not only a significant driver of global warming, but also, if we don't drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions the already-disastrous effects of global warming will get much worse by mid-century. This will likely include more crop failures, hunger and illness, extreme weather, and extinction of species.

Meanwhile, we have a president who clings to the absurd notion that climate change is a hoax created by China. Trump has filled his cabinet with climate deniers, withdrawn the United States from the Paris Climate Accord, rolled back President Obama's Clean Power Plan, and opened our fragile coastal waters and precious public lands for new oil and gas extraction. Trump is even trying to reduce mileage standards for new cars and trucks. He is doing everything possible to move us backwards at a time when we should be taking bold action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

But the good news is that despite President Trump's efforts to prop up his billionaire friends in the coal, oil and gas industries, there is a revolution happening in communities all across this country when it comes to renewable energy and energy efficiency. And that is why events like SolarFest are so important. This is celebration of the common sense solution of moving toward solar energy as a major component of our energy system. And the great thing is, solar makes excellent economic sense, too. In fact, the cheapest energy being produced anywhere in the world right now is solar energy.

SolarFest is critically important for another reason, too. I have long believed that real change comes from the grassroots. Change comes when people come together and speak out on the issues they care about, just as you are doing today.

Please know that I stand shoulder to shoulder with you in this struggle and will continue to advocate for strong climate legislation that ends corporate welfare for huge polluters and instead, promotes a clean energy future.

I wish you all the best for a successful weekend at SolarFest.

Sincerely,



BERNIE SANDERS
UNITED STATES SENATOR