

# Solar an economic engine for Arizona's sunny climes

With all due respect to Florida, Arizona is the "Sunshine State."

And whether the economy is up or down, it can't kill our sun.

Sun brought us the magnificent real-estate sector which has largely sustained this economy. Although the sun still shines, folks can't afford to move here right now, so real estate is napping and home builders are idle. We need an economic bolt — solar-generated power can be the new home builder.



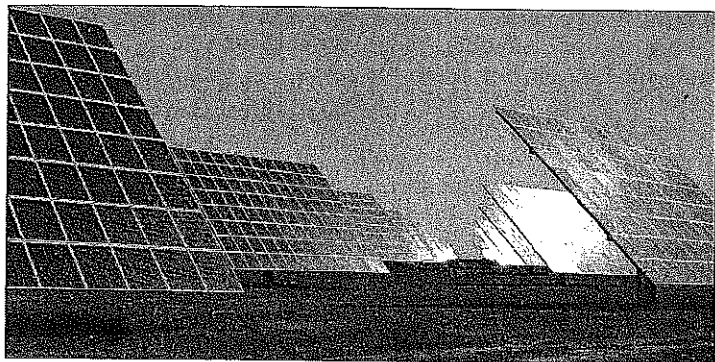
**JORDAN ROSE**  
MY TURN

If, during this downturn, we treat the solar industry as positively as we have treated the real-estate sector, solar will be the new economic engine for Arizona. Our economy has always been tied to our sunlight, so let's not reinvent the secret of our success.

Whether you like it for the "right" reasons (good for the environment, in sync with nature, etc.), or you accept it for the potentially "wrong" reasons (the best source of immediate economic development for our state — money!), there is no doubt we must help this industry thrive in Arizona.

Despite some rumors you may have heard, national studies done by the solar industry name the state of Arizona as the No. 1 place for solar energy because of the quantity and quality of our sunlight.

You may say it's a fad and only those folks who drink raw milk and resist the temptation to buy leather shoes will go solar. Not true. Because of mandates, tax credits and stimulus



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Because of mandates, tax credits and stimulus money, the solar industry will expand quickly here and may help our economy.

money, solar will expand quickly. Whether you like government intervention or not, both the state and federal government have mandated that 15 percent and soon likely up to 25 percent of all energy sold by utilities be created from renewable sources (solar, wind, etc.).

It doesn't matter if you are conservative or liberal; figuring out how to put Arizonans to work is in everyone's best interests.

Many in our state get it and are making massive advances in promoting the industry. The Arizona Corporation Commission has just approved the first net metering plan which will give APS customers the ability to get a check or credit back if they produce more power from their solar panels than they use. In this economy, if a person can receive a check at the end of the year just because it was sunny outside, we are definitely going to be selling more solar systems.

Corporation commissioners are also reviewing arrangements in which a homeowner, business owner, government or school district can install solar panels with no up-front cost. And the Legislature ap-

pears to be approving bills making it easier for schools to save money on energy by installing solar panels, allowing credits for manufacturing and giving municipalities the ability to set up special districts to finance solar projects.

If every Arizonan could figure out some small way to support solar energy, just as we support our real-estate industry by buying homes, shopping at retailers, and leasing commercial space, our economy could roar back to a time when headlines were reporting that your house only appreciated in value by 4 percent and that was slightly depressing.

While we can't specifically predict when the real-estate market will reawaken, one thing is for certain: The sun will always shine. And it's tanning weather for the Arizona economy.

*Jordan Rose is founder and managing partner of Rose Law Group in Scottsdale, Arizona.*

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