



February 19, 2025

House Energy & Environment Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Re: HB 1096 Automated permits clean energy technology

Dear Energy & Environment Committee.

My name is Ann Sutton, living in Westminster CO. This testimony represents the position of the League of Women Voters of Colorado in Support of a bill that may encourage and facilitate the adoption of distributed solar energy for residences. Installation costs may be reduced, and certain delays may be mitigated by local jurisdictions' implementation of permitting software with technical assistance as funded by the Colorado Energy Office.

My own installation of Solar in 2013 took approximately 5 months from contract-signing until connection to the grid. Since then, my city has implemented online permitting and fast targets for application review and inspection. However, many of my colleagues in the League of Women Voters have related to me delays in completing permitting even now, in 2025.

The League supported the earlier legislation that implemented the CEO grant program. We continue to support this initiative because we support the environmentally sound use of energy resources with emphasis using energy-efficient technologies, and predominant reliance on renewable resources.

Thank you to the sponsors for providing this encouragement to our citizens and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann Sutton". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light blue rectangular background.

Ann Sutton Volunteer Lobbyist
League of Women Voters of Colorado
110 16th Street Mall
Suite 1326
Denver, CO 80202

House Energy & Environment

02/20/2025 01:30 PM

HB25-1096 Automated Permits for Clean Energy Tech

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Justin Wilson Against themselves	In my opinion no government body should create a bill that attempts to solve an issue like water shortages by limiting artificial turn which is designed to limit water in the first place. Start over with commonsense ways to limit water use.
Thea Samson Against themselves	<p>My partner and I recently completed a solar project on our home in Colorado. We are generally extremely supportive of any legislation that forwards a move toward greener energy and more sustainable communities. This bill is concerning because of our recent experience installing solar.</p> <p>We went with a company through a group buy arranged by our city, we felt confident in the company chosen and the process arranged by the city. Unfortunately we experienced set back after set back. The permit was pulled for the wrong design- one that was not in our contact, we went through multiple manager contacts, the company changed solar providers half way through the project, our managers were unresponsive, the inspection took four tries before passing, the city inspector was threatened by the installer, the installer was fired last minute, Xcel took months to cut the power for the install and inspection corrections, among other issues.</p> <p>I am grateful that the city played a role in the inspection and permitting process because by the end of this experience I have very little faith in the competency or integrity of solar companies. Through this ordeal we met others with similar negative experiences. I do not believe that solar companies, who notoriously go out of business and have personnel issues, as ours did, can be accountable for installing solar projects without the oversight of municipalities.</p> <p>It is argued that the permitting process slows down the installation, yet in our experience the city was extremely fast to review the permit (both times it was submitted) and to inspect the project. Xcel, on the other hand, was booking months out to cut the power to do the install and make adjustments after the failed inspection. These delays from Xcel are ultimately what added many months to our project. Our contact at the solar company said Xcel was also unresponsive to email and had to be repeatedly called before even reaching a scheduler for the cut power. If anything, legislation should streamline this process and force power companies to work more efficiently with solar companies.</p> <p>Thank you</p>

<p>Lilly Steirer</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>As an Edgewater City Council member and the Sustainability Board liaison, I have been actively involved in initiatives including writing & implementation of our first sustainability plan, advocating for a solar group buy, and launching our municipal compost program. While I support efforts to clear barriers to solar energy, I am concerned that a faster permitting process, as proposed in HB 25-1096, may compromise the quality and safety of solar installations for homeowners.</p> <p>After electrifying our home, we were able to install solar panels last year. My recent personal experience with the solar permitting process, discussions with residents, and Edgewater's permit department all reveal that the concerns cited in HB 25-1096, such as months of delay and an average of \$6,000 per project, do not reflect the reality in Edgewater, where permits are typically issued within five days at an average cost of \$930.</p> <p>Additionally, as an advocate for our solar group buy, residents' reached out to me personally with frustrations when the selected company was acquired by a larger firm, leading to poor communication, subpar installations, and design problems that would have damaged their home, but were thankfully discovered during the permit process- where yes, permitting was delayed until the solar company could create a safer design. For our home, our solar company left exposed wiring under our panels, resulting in damage to our system shortly after installation that took months to fix. These scenarios highlight the need for thorough inspections rather than automated permitting.</p> <p>The real bottleneck lies with Xcel Energy, which has no incentive or requirements to expedite service. After our permit was approved, Xcel took nearly two months to respond, delaying our ability to generate solar energy. Furthermore, our solar company mishandled our account setup with Xcel, leading them to billing two separate accounts on our home resulting in threats of service disconnection. We already contacted the public utility commission with hopes to keep our power on and reduce our double bills to one.</p> <p>While I support consistent permitting, I prioritize quality and thorough inspections over speed. The influx of unqualified solar companies during our state's critical push towards clean energy, poses a greater risk than the permitting process. I urge the Energy & Environment Committee to consult municipalities about their timelines & pricing and reasons for delaying or denying projects that might have been deemed unsafe. Ultimately, my hope is that you will focus on improving inspection standards while holding solar companies and Xcel accountable, rather than rushing and automating the permitting process.</p> <p>Please work to address the real challenges in the solar industry and ensure that our communities can transition to clean energy effectively and safely. Please consider empowering local municipalities to manage permitting processes that prioritize</p>
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	<p>quality and consumer protection over speed. Thank you for considering my concerns about this bill, but more importantly for the work that you do for our state and our environment.</p>
<p>Xerxes Steirer Against themselves</p>	<p>Colorado State Legislature 200 E Colfax Ave Denver, CO 80203</p> <p>Re: Testimony Regarding House Bill 25-1096 (Automatic Solar Permitting Applications)</p> <p>Dear Members of the Colorado State Legislature:</p> <p>I am writing to provide testimony on House Bill 25-1096, which would mandate automatic solar permitting application approvals throughout the state. I come before you as a strong advocate for solar energy, power sector resilience, and cutting unnecessary red tape. However, based on my direct experience with solar installation projects, I have concerns about the bill’s current approach, which I believe overlooks critical safeguards that protect homeowners, the solar industry, and the broader community.</p> <p>As the chair of the Edgewater Sustainability Board, I worked with Solar United, a group purchase program that in its first Denver area round organized over 3,000 sign-ups for discounted solar installations. I also recently had solar installed on my own home. Through these experiences, I have gained insights into the solar installer business, the permitting process, customer experiences, and the practical realities of ensuring safe, quality installations. To illustrate my perspective, I respectfully share the following points:</p> <p>Permitting problems typically stem from poor design</p> <p>The bill references an 18% figure to argue that permitting creates delays or obstructions, but this can be a one-sided view. In many cases, permitting authorities identify design flaws, structural concerns, or electrical issues that homeowners might otherwise overlook. These checks are vital to prevent potentially dangerous or costly “nightmare scenarios.”</p> <p>Installers vary widely in skill and expertise</p> <p>In my city, the permitting process has been essential for stopping inadequate or unsafe installations before they became a reality. Homeowners were notified of serious issues and given the opportunity to switch to more qualified installers,</p>

	<p>protecting them from the negative outcomes that can persist for decades if subpar work is completed.</p> <p>My own home needed more protections and thorough inspections</p> <p>Despite a robust process, my installation still suffered faulty wiring that caused arcing and represented a serious fire hazard. The defective wiring led to immediate inverter failure and lost energy savings now approaching \$1,000. This underscores the fact that certain aspect for quality controls and inspections need to be even stronger, not automatically waived.</p> <p>Permitting departments catch substandard work</p> <p>Conversations with our city’s permitting office confirm that the review process is the best defense against installers who lack the necessary knowledge or skill. Reducing or removing these quality checks will allow more unsafe practices to slip through, ultimately harming more consumers and the industry’s reputation.</p> <p>In conclusion, while I share the goal of expanding solar adoption and reducing administrative burdens, I believe House Bill 25-1096 should undergo further discussion and input from diverse community partners—including homeowners, permitting offices, and insurance companies—before moving forward. Lowering quality standards may expedite installations in the short term, but it risks undermining long-term consumer confidence and the broader success of residential solar in Colorado.</p> <p>I appreciate your time and consideration of my testimony. Thank you for your commitment to shaping effective legislation that balances the expansion of clean energy with the safety and satisfaction of Colorado homeowners.</p>
<p>Jeany Rush Against themselves</p>	<p>TO: HOUSE Energy & Environment Committee</p> <p>RE: HB25-1096 Automated Permits for Clean Energy Technology</p> <p>Sponsors: Smith, Brown, Ball 2-21-25</p> <p>FROM: Jeany Rush, Colorado Springs Constituent</p> <p>Vote: NO</p> <p>"The bill requires counties with a population of more than 5,000 residents in unincorporated areas and municipalities with a population of more than 5,000</p>

	<p>residents to adopt an ordinance or resolution that would implement an automated residential solar permitting platform (platform). The platform would automatically review an application for a residential solar panel installation and issue a permit for the residential solar panel installation project if the project is code-compliant and meets certain criteria."</p> <p>I am re-quoting your bill for a reason! Unincorporated areas, should not be the pervue of the STATE, or its currently misguided parameters for energy policy in this state. The STATE, IN ALL OF ITS OVER REACHING GRANDEUR HAS made it a mission to keep more and more controls over our policies, and private rights as landowners. We are talking about making policies based on what is now known as erroneous energy policies, and based on actual non-scientific guidelines for what is Clean Energy, what is economical energy, and what are the rights of legislators like yourselves, to further bring in more and more rules, fees, laws, and controls on landowners. Too many cities are already unconstitutionally over reaching into municipalities, and county lands. I believe before you all do any more laws, bills, you need to review what is really truly CLEAN ENERGY, and what CHEVRON and other items actually mean, and what you all have authority to do. The entire state energy policy is based on lies, and manipulations to force ideas which are not science. Let's begin with CO2! It is not a pollutant, it is life itself, and no one is telling the truth about the real science: Try reading Inconvenient Facts, By Gregory Wrightstone, and watching A Climate Conversation. You will learn how misguided your information is. You will learn the real nasty secrets about the large solar and wind farms. Not Clean, and Not cheap. And I dont agree that nuclear is clean either. When was uranium mining clean? When was lithium mining Clean? As designations go I am saying. We have improved and cleaner gas, oil, coal. The other "pseudo renewables" will not sustain us. This body has made tons of horrible decisions based on false science, like a bunch of robots, getting their marching orders from AI bots like Bloomberg, and other robots and lobbyists making bills from outside of our state. Add the immense number of illegal uses of eminent domain, lies about transmission lines, about carbon pipelines (hundreds of times more dangerous than gas lines) and the real truths about all of this, costing our taxpayers trillions in funds for Lies! It is sad, but it is irresponsible. So until the real scientific data is put forth, and this state has to face the truths about its mismanagement and conflicts of interest, (I cannot wait for DOGE to land here) I say No and No.</p>
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