

## Californian regulators adopt \$2.9 billion solar power plan

*This was what Carter tried back in the 70s and those roof-top solar panels have decayed since then and never been renewed. This is \$2.9 billion down the drain.*

Reuters  
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The California Public Utilities Commission on Thursday approved a \$2.9 billion program to make California one of the world's largest producers of solar power.

The "California Solar Initiative," backed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, aims to add 3,000 megawatts of solar energy over 11 years through the installation of 1 million rooftop solar energy systems on homes, businesses, farms, schools and public buildings.

That amount of electricity would be equivalent to about six new power stations.

The measure was approved on a 3-to-1 vote with one commissioner recusing himself because of a conflict of interest.

If the program is fully implemented, California would become the world's third-largest solar generator behind Japan and Germany. The state currently has about 100 megawatts of solar electricity.

The program will offer rebates for adding solar systems and is expected to give a big boost to manufacturers of solar power generating cells and panels.

The money for the program will come from existing funds already earmarked for solar energy and gas and electric utility rates.

The average residential utility bill would go up by 65 cents a month, according to Environment California, a solar power supporter.

Solar spending could save California utility customers an estimated \$9 billion from a reduced need to build new power plants and purchase electricity supplies during high demand days in the summer, according to a CPUC report.

Schwarzenegger pushed a solar energy bill in the state legislature last year, but it stalled amid policy disputes and amendments.

The Republican governor's energy goals call for making renewable energy like solar and wind power 20 percent of California's electricity resources by 2017.