

**Statement of
Commissioner Rachelle Chong
Item 47: California Solar Initiative
January 12, 2005**

Colleagues:

I fully support the Proposed Decision being sponsored by President Peevey on the California Solar Initiative. Furthermore, I am proud to have joined a Commission that has stepped up to the plate to move this initiative forward.

Our ever growing reliance on fossil fuels in California and the rest of the country has put such pressure on the prices of these commodities that we are continuing to see record prices every year. If this isn't a wake up call, then I don't know what is.

So it is with great pleasure that my first vote on the Commission is a vote for the future: a future in which we as a society move toward a cleaner, more reliable energy future. A future that is very real.

Over the next ten years, the initiative we adopt today will seek to install 3,000 megawatts of additional solar capacity in the state. This is aggressive.

What I believe we should not lose sight of though is the fact that these 3,000 megawatts will not produce the harmful emissions that contribute to climate change; they will not put more pressure on the price of natural gas which is already at record levels; and they will not require a transmission line to be built through someone's backyard.

I would like to commend President Peevey for his leadership on this historic decision and in the renewables area overall – through your unwavering dedication, California continues to be recognized as a national leader in this area.