

Solar program in jeopardy, including in Nevada

By Erin Kelly, Reno Gazette-Journal

WASHINGTON – The solar power industry is facing a double threat from a Congress that might turn off the flow of federal subsidies and take a pass on mandating renewable energy standards that would increase demand.

The Republican-led House, focused on cutting spending, has targeted federal grant and loan guarantee programs to reduce or eliminate.

One is a U.S. Treasury grant program, set to expire at the end of this year, that solar companies said has kept them alive through the recession. The other is an Energy Department loan guarantee program, part of which would end Oct. 1, that has provided nearly \$35 billion in loan guarantees for solar, wind, geothermal and other clean energy projects that have generated more than 68,000 U.S. jobs, according to the department.

Just this year in Nevada, the Energy Department provided a conditional loan guarantee of \$737 million for the Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project in Tonopah, creating about 5,000 jobs in the state, which has the nation's highest jobless rate. A second loan guarantee of nearly \$46 million was provided for a solar generation facility to be developed northeast of Las Vegas by Fotowatio Renewable Ventures Inc. The project is expected to create about 250 jobs.

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