

**BEFORE THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**CRYSTALLINE SILICON PHOTOVOLTAIC CELLS AND MODULES FROM CHINA
INV. NOS. 701-TA-481 AND 731-TA-1190 (REVIEW)**

**TESTIMONY OF
HAMILTON DAVIS
DIRECTOR OF REGULATORY AFFAIRS
SOUTHERN CURRENT LLC**

Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Hamilton Davis, and I am the Director of Regulatory Affairs for Southern Current, LLC.

Southern Current is a Charleston, SC based company with over 100 direct employees. We also indirectly employ hundreds more through construction contractors and subcontractors. Southern Current is one of the largest solar development firms in the country, with 400MWs of solar PV plants placed in service to date. Our solar power activities have translated into \$70 million in wages generated from these projects in South Carolina and North Carolina.

Looking ahead, we have over \$2 billion of investments across six states planned between 2019 and 2022. These projects represent \$20 million in grid improvements, \$280 million in new job wages, and \$212 million in new property tax revenue for local jurisdictions.

As you know, solar energy must compete against an array of other technologies to generate and sell power. Even in the face of the natural gas

fracking boom and historically low natural gas prices, the solar industry has continued to grow, innovate, and generate competitively priced electric power.

Unfortunately, the Section 201 tariff and additional trade barriers have created uncertainty in the manufacturing supply chain, as well as price volatility. This is because trade restrictions, like the Section 201 tariff, negatively impact our industry's ability to compete in many energy markets, especially markets like the Southeast where independent power producers are competing against monopoly utilities. Trade restrictions directly lead to reduced orders, fewer installations, cancelled projects, lost revenue and reduced employment across all sectors of the solar industry.

As a consequence, Southern Current has had to actively reexamine many of our projects. For example, because of difficulties in procuring solar modules, Southern Current was forced to delay or cancel over 100MW of projects in 2018. The fact is that trade barriers are an impediment to our ability to compete and supply solar energy to U.S. electricity market.

I also want to add that very few solar modules are today being sourced from China for the US utility-scale solar market. In 2017 and 2018, Southern Current sourced our modules from countries other than China, and therefore trade restrictions specific to China – the focus of this hearing – are not currently relevant to our business operations.

Our team evaluates potential suppliers based on product quality that must meet our technical specifications, as well as product availability. Although price is a consideration in our purchasing decisions, it is not a leading factor in module procurement. Unfortunately, U.S. solar product manufacturers have not been able to meet Southern Current's combined technical standards and volume needs. To the extent that the domestic industry is able to meet these needs in the future, we are inclined to source more of our modules domestically. Until then, we will continue to source large volumes of high-quality products from the most viable international vendors.

Southern Current respectfully asks that the Commission carefully consider the facts presented in this review and revoke the duties on imports of solar products from China. We pledge to do our part in continuing to support the growth of the U.S. solar industry, the creation of American jobs and the lowering of electricity costs for consumers.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.