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### **Statement of Cyrus Reed on Austin City Council Approving 300 MW of Solar Energy**

Austin, TEXAS -- Today, Austin City Council approved contracts that would increase the city's solar energy resources by up to 300 megawatts. Now it is expected that the city's electric utility, Austin Energy, will secure the cheapest solar energy to date in the state of Texas – approximately \$38-40 per Megawatt-hour (MWh). In addition, the new solar capacity means that renewable energy will soon comprise 40 percent of Austin's energy portfolio by 2016 - bringing it closer to its 55 percent renewable energy by 2025 goal.

In a move supported by most stakeholders, City Council also asked Austin Energy to review a second set of solar proposals for potential contracts, and try to reduce prices for an additional 300-350 MW and return to Council by mid-October.

In response, **Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director of the Sierra Club's Lone Star Chapter**, issued the following statement:

“Today, the Austin City Council took bold action toward a clean energy future by approving these contracts that make Austin the clear solar leader in Texas - even ahead of San Antonio. This is a product of more than a year's worth of work between Sierra Club, Public Citizen, Climate Buddies, Clean Water Action, Solar Austin, Austin Interfaith, SEED Coalition, and many others to advocate for more clean, affordable energy in Austin, and it's something every Austinite can be proud of.”

“We also applaud Austin City Council for waiting two weeks on making a decision on the other 300 MW of proposed solar energy, and sending those contracts through its citizen advisory committees before taking a vote. More time will allow Austin Energy to continue to negotiate even better prices and provide the advisory committees an opportunity to see if some of those contracts are better than others as we work toward our overall goal of 750 MW of utility-scale solar by 2025.”