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🕒 February 6, 2023 👤 Carroll News 📁 News, Top Stories 💬 0



The Virginia Coalition for Human Rights (VCHR) has responded to an article published in the January 18, 2023 edition of The Carroll News titled, "Energix proposes two solar projects in Carroll County."

Some Carroll County citizens received mailings about the Blue Orchard Project from a group known as the Virginia Coalition of Human Rights. Katie Hernandez, External Affairs Manager USA for Energix, was quoted as saying, "It is someone else's agenda against our company."

WEATHER

Hillsville, VA 2434

Weather	Wind	Rain	Sun
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50.2 °F
Mostly Sunny

32 °F 51 °F

42 57 TUE	46 60 WED	42 THU
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4:33 PM Mon Feb 6

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The following is the response from the VHCR:

“The Virginia Coalition for Human Rights (VCHR) is a broadly based coalition that advocates for universal human rights that focuses on Palestinian human rights.

VCHR supports responsible solar energy, but it opposes the construction of solar energy projects by Energix Renewable Energies because its parent company, Energix Group Ltd, has been cited by the United Nations for its violations of human rights in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the Golan Heights.

Energix is listed as #32 on the 2020 UNHCR report because Energix utilized land (natural resources) that did not belong to them for business purposes. Of particular concern was the Meitarim Solar Field in the occupied West Bank and the field of wind turbines in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

VCHR has observed Energix importation of its worst overseas practices to Virginia. Although Energix cannot appropriate land in Virginia without compensation, Energix may have violated Virginians’ right to freedom from property damage by others and Virginian’s right to freedom from toxic trespass.

Local governing boards in Virginia have expressed concerns over two major issues: (1) fines of over \$90,000 by the Department of Environmental Quality for violation of four state environmental laws at Energix sites in Buckingham and Wythe counties, and (2) Energix’s exclusive utilization of solar panels that consist of Cadmium Telluride (CdTe), which is a compound that consists of two heavy metals that have the potential to leak into soil and water. Three U.S. Government agencies designate CdTe as hazardous, four Virginia counties forbid its use, and two require annual testing of solar site soil and water.

Other claims made by Energix have been questioned, such as its claim of the global usage of these panels (they represent only 5% of the world solar panel production share), the reports that evidence CdTe safety (reports commissioned by First Solar),

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utilization of only U.S.-made equipment (65% of panels are made in Southeast Asia), the lack of publicly reviewable recycling contracts with First Solar, and the TLCP testing results of the Mojave Desert catastrophe (not publicly available).

To date, five counties have either denied permits to Energix or Energix has withdrawn its application under community backlash.

- Pulaski County: Permit denied to Helios Solar LLC
- New Kent County: Energix application withdrawal of New Kent Solar
- Caroline County: Permit denied to Racehorse Solar
- Dinwiddie County: Permit denied to Lily Pond Solar.”
- Franklin County: Energix application withdrawal of Westlake Solar



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