

Kingston, NY- Continuing their collective effort to establish upstate New York as a national and international hub for solar energy research and development, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), Ulster County officials, and representatives from the Ulster County Development Corporation (UCDC) and The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC) today announce the signing of a new solar manufacturing company, Solar Thin Films, Inc. The company will locate itself in Ulster County and is expected to create 400 new jobs in Ulster County over the next five years.

"Today we take another enormous step forward in our goal of establishing the Hudson Valley and all of New York as a national and international hub for solar research and development," Hinchey said. "I am especially pleased that Solar Thin Films uses amorphous silicon since it is the most well-developed thin film technology to-date and has a promising avenue of further development. Solar Thin Films is playing a critical role in the steady advancement of solar technology by increasing the efficiency of solar products and lowering their costs. I am excited to welcome into The Solar Energy Consortium, Solar Thin Films -- a firm dedicated to making solar technology more mainstream across the county, state and country."

The new manufacturing partnership with Solar Thin Films further cements TSEC as a unique leader in solar research and development. Solar Thin Films, Inc., which first contacted Hinchey's office about the possibility of establishing a manufacturing facility in Ulster County after learning about the congressman's involvement with TSEC, will use its new Ulster County location as the company's initial amorphous solar module manufacturing plant in the United States. Machinery used to create this type of solar module will be manufactured by STF technologies, Ltd., a division of Solar Thin Films. The company hopes to put in place six lines of equipment capable of producing 36 megawatts of module power. The facility will ultimately require a staff of approximately 400 people. Solar Thin Films will also use its new Ulster County location for research into the enhancement of amorphous silicon module efficiency as well as the development of copper indium gallium selenide (CIGS) panels.

According to TSEC CEO Vincent Cozzolino, today's announcement adds momentum to the goal of bringing a significant number of solar-related enterprises not only to the Hudson Valley, but throughout New York State and beyond.

"We take great encouragement from today's development. Our partnership with Congressman Hinchey, his dedication and our considerable effort, plus the support of the County Legislature, the UCDC and public and commercial interests represented here today, clearly represents an important step forward for the economic future of this region," Cozzolino said.

Robert Rubin, Solar Thin Films' Chairman said, "TSEC is to be complimented in making Solar Thin Films aware of the enormous potential available in Ulster County as the company pursues its goal to be a leading provider of amorphous silicon solar modules. TSEC and the Ulster County Development Corporation have assisted Solar Thin Films in finding an appropriate factory site, have assisted us in satisfying our financial needs and have been instrumental in forging potential power partnerships. These steps will be instrumental in protecting the environment, reducing our need and utilization of oil and significantly alter the rate of the energy cost spiral. We hope to be a major employer in the county and more importantly a very good neighbor."

In the coming days, Solar Thin Films will formally apply for a \$10 million industrial development bond with the assistance of the Ulster County Development Corporation in order to aid in the purchase of equipment. Ultimately, Solar Thin Films will invest approximately \$50 million into the manufacturing and research components.

"The promotion of clean, renewable technology is critical to revitalizing our community. The work of The Solar Energy Consortium in attracting solar companies to the Hudson Valley is exactly the type of creative economic development Ulster County needs," said Assemblymember Kevin Cahill. "The Hudson Valley is poised to become a leader in solar innovation. That is why I secured \$6.5 million in the 2008-2009 State budget for the Consortium to attract companies such as Solar Thin Films to our region. I have been happy to work together with Congressman Hinchey and the fine leadership of TSEC to get the green economy moving,"

"The Ulster County Development Corporation worked long and hard with TSEC to reach this milestone –one more significant solar operation for Ulster County," said Lance Matteson, President of the Ulster County Development Corporation. "We're delighted that Solar Thin Films shares the Hinchey-TSEC-Ulster County vision and that it will bring its solar manufacturing expertise and resources -- plus well-paid employment -- to the region."

Hinchey helped organize and create TSEC in upstate New York, which is a new industry-driven, non-profit organization that provides leadership, organization, resources, and support for the establishment of a major solar energy industry cluster in New York. TSEC is the first organization of its kind for the photovoltaic industry, encompassing research and development, manufacturing facilities, industry promotion and market development. Earlier this year, TSEC partnered with its first major manufacturing partner, Prism Solar Technologies, which plans to bring more than 400 new jobs to upstate New York within 4-5 years. TSEC has also partnered

with six research universities throughout New York to work on the research needed to improve solar technology.

"While we will never be able to drill our way out of the energy crisis, we can turn to the sun as a solution," Hinchey said. "Through our combined efforts to establish TSEC and bring in partners like Prism and Solar Thin Films, we are positioning New York as a leader in the advancement of this critical technology."

In order to advance TSEC, Hinchey helped secure \$1.476 million in federal funds last year to help bring companies such as Prism Solar Technologies into the consortium. The congressman also secured final approval of \$3.2 million last year for C9 Corporation to conduct solar research and development in conjunction with TSEC. In June 2008, Hinchey secured the House Appropriations Committee's approval of an additional \$2.9 million for TSEC and its partners. Additionally, Hinchey helped convince Empire State Development to contribute a \$1.5 million grant to attract solar energy companies to TSEC. Subsequently, the recently approved New York State budget includes \$6.5 million for TSEC. Ulster County has also committed \$200,000 to the consortium.

Hinchey also worked very hard to help the House pass an extension of tax incentives for the development and purchase of solar products; speaking on several occasions to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi to encourage her to help pass the bill. While there have been several versions of the bill, the most recent one, the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act, is the one Hinchey is pushing the Senate to pass so that it can move to the White House to become law.

That bill focuses aggressively on helping to boost solar energy research and development while also making it more affordable for consumers to purchase solar panels for their homes. The bill extends a 30 percent tax credit on solar products purchased by consumers and doubles the annual cap to \$4,000. The measure also extends the business solar energy tax credit at a level of 30 percent for six years, a long-term action that will spur investments and in turn make solar equipment more competitive and less costly.